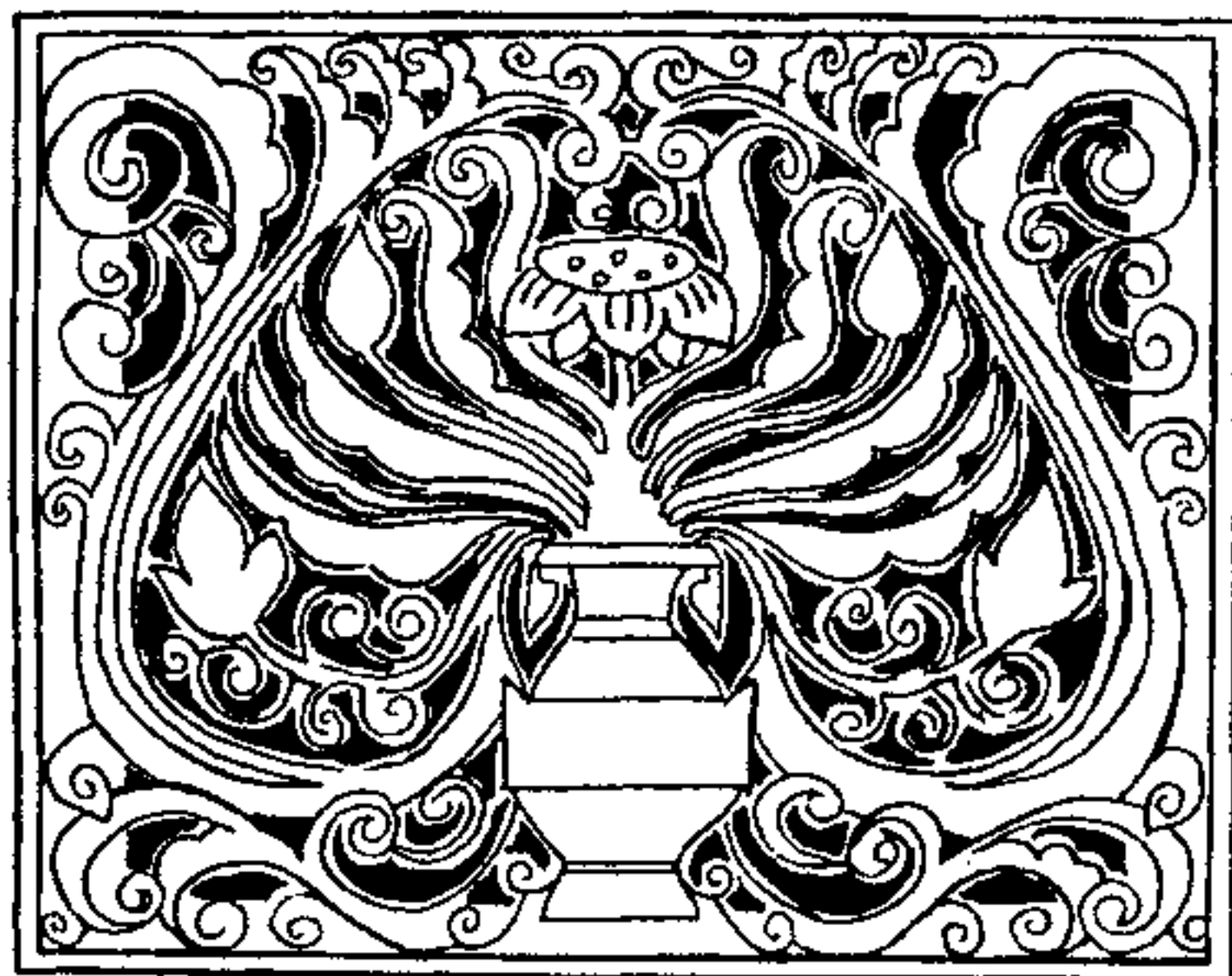




PRABUDDHA BHARATA

A Monthly Journal of the
Ramakrishna Order
Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

Editorial Office
P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office
5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014

Phone (91)(33)244 0898
(91)(33)245 2383
Fax (91)(33)245 0050



Rates of Subscription (inclusive of postage)

Annual Life
(30 Years)

India	Rs. 45	Rs. 500
Sri Lanka & Bangladesh	Rs. 120	Rs. 2000

U.S.A. & Canada		
Air Mail	\$ 20	\$ 300
Other Countries		
Air Mail	£ 15	£ 225

Cover: A view of the Himalayas
from Nepal

DECEMBER 1996

CONTENTS

Divine Wisdom	649
Remembering Jesus Christ	
<i>Editorial</i>	650
Mundaka-Upaniṣad	
<i>Swami Sridharananda</i>	653
On Surrendering Too Soon	
<i>P. Shneidre</i>	657
Girish Chandra Ghosh :	
A Struggling Personality	
<i>Dr. Sasanka B. Bandyopadhyay</i>	658
Man-making Education	
<i>Swami Muktidananda</i>	665
Beyond the Waterfall	
<i>Robert P. Utter</i>	674
Sister Nivedita and the <i>Swadeshi</i>	
Movement of Bengal	
<i>Dr. Anil Baran Ray</i>	679

(Continued on next page)

CONTENTS (Contd.)

To What Extent Buddhism Repudiated Vedic Religion ? Y. Krishan	685	Practical Vedanta	690
Open Appeal	689	Reviews and Notices	691



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

(JANUARY—DECEMBER 1996)

Editor
Managing Editor

Swami Atmaramananda
Swami Mumukshananda

Title Index

Advaita Vedanta?, Is the Question of Morality Irrelevant in — <i>Sanghamitra Dāsgupta</i>	335
Agriculture, Traditional — <i>K. Vijayalakshmi</i>	390
All Work and No Play... ..	638
Australia Today, Some Meditation Practices in — <i>Eric Murphy</i>	121
Australian Society, Swami Vivekananda's Ideas and the — <i>Pravrajika Ajayapraia</i> ...	111
Beyond the Waterfall — <i>Robert P. Utter</i>	674
<i>Bhagavad-Gītā</i> , Madhusudana Saraswati on the — <i>Swami Gambhirananda</i>	176, 222, 271, 317, 366, 412
Bondage — <i>Dr. B.R. Dey</i>	377
Books Received	216, 359, 456
Boundarylessness, A Sense of — <i>Ajit S. Gopal</i>	259
Buddhism Repudiated Vedic Religion?, To What Extent — <i>Y. Krishan</i>	685
Communication in Ancient India, Philosophical Foundation of — <i>Kiran Ramachandran Nair</i>	197
Datta, Asvinikumar: Sri Ramakrishna Touched Them — <i>Swami Prabhananda</i>	273
Deoghar, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, — <i>A Special Correspondent of Prabuddha Bharata</i>	92
Divine Wisdom	169, 217, 265, 313, 361, 409, 457, 505, 553, 601, 649
Editorial — <i>Swami Atmaramananda</i>	
Drug Abuse and the Hindu Scriptures	602
Idolatry?	506
Knowledge is Power	170
New Year Hopes	8

On Charity	314
Relationship with the Divine	362
Remembering Jesus Christ	650
Scriptural Study and Swamiji's Four A's	554
Sustaining Our Aspiration	218
The Twentieth Century Skill in Action	410
Those Mischievous Gods	266
Why 'Practical Vedanta'?	458
Education, Man-making — <i>Swami Muktidananda</i>	616, 665
Emerson's India, Travelling Through — <i>Dr. Umesh Patri</i>	622
Feminism—Ideologies and Needs — <i>Dr. Chetana Mandavia</i>	145
Forces, Cognitive — <i>Richard Chambers Prescott</i>	82
Forward, A Great Leap — <i>Rajni Bakshi</i>	138
Franciscan Monks, A Dialogue With	382
Ghosh, Girish Chandra: A Struggling Personality — <i>Trans. Dr. Sasanka Bhushan Bandyopadhyay</i>	658
Gobind Singh: A Saint-Soldier, Guru — <i>Jasbir Kaur Ahuja</i>	483
God a Mere Social Necessity?, Is — <i>Kanwaljit Singh</i>	490
Gods Reside, Where — <i>Shanti Dighe</i>	436
Holy Mother, Reminiscences of the — <i>Sushama Sen</i>	571
Incongruity — <i>C. Achutha Menon</i>	615
Inter-Religious Dialogue: Prospects and Possibilities — <i>B.A. Reddy</i>	128
Krishna, My Beloved — <i>Prof. V. Gopinath</i>	475
Letters, Unpublished	341, 417
Mahavir the Jain Prophet, Life and Message of — <i>Dr. Janardan Singh</i>	330
Man: Sri Aurobindo, Nature and Destiny of — <i>Dr. A. Usha Rani</i>	433
Maya of Phenomenal Existence, The — <i>S. Balasundaram</i>	226
Mind, A Garden—My — <i>Sujata Padmanabhan</i>	30
Mindset, The Cultic — <i>Richard Chambers Prescott</i> 424	
Mission to the World, A — <i>John Schlenck and Erik Johns</i>	68
Mission to the World', A Sister's Tribute to 'A— <i>Ananda</i>	65
Mukti — <i>Saswata De</i>	191
<i>Mundaka-Upaniṣad</i> , The — <i>Swami Sridharananda</i>	131, 207, 249, 305, 346, 400, 446, 461, 509, 559, 608, 653
Nagarjuna Experience, The — <i>K.S. Raju</i>	85
Nanda, The Pariah Saint	467, 511, 562, 611
Nations of the Third Byte — <i>Alvin Toffler and Heidi Toffler</i>	173
News and Reports	150, 213, 353, 451, 499, 596
One — <i>Lalit K. Mukerjee</i>	573

Practical Vedanta	212, 261, 310, 352, 402, 450, 498, 548, 593, 644, 690
Quantum Theory, Unity and Diversity — <i>Prof. Geoffrey Chew</i>	494
Rajak Resists Glitter, Wins a Sister	350
Ramakrishna Embraced Them — <i>N. Gopinath</i>	570
Ramakrishna's Incarnation: A Study, Sri — <i>Swami Sridurgananda</i>	476
Ramakrishna's Life and Teachings: Remembering Sri, On Surrendering Too Soon	657
The Spiritual Life of God— <i>P. Shneidre</i>	568
Ramakrishna's Vision (<i>Darshana</i>) as Conceived by Swami Vivekananda, Sri — <i>Shanti Dighe</i>	192
Readers, To Our	7
Readers, From Our	130, 134, 228
Reform for India and the World, Basic Programme of — <i>R. Das</i>	234
Religion and Diversity — <i>Dr. Huston Smith</i>	420
Review Article—Jesus Christ: An Artifice for Aggression — <i>Dr. Satish K. Kapoor</i>	444
Review Article—Living Wisdom: Vedanta in the West — <i>Dr. M. Sivaramkrishna</i>	253
Review Article—The Love Inside — <i>Gillian Wright</i>	539
Review Article—The Nectar of Discourses on <i>Ishavasya-Upanishad</i> , A — <i>Swami Bhasvatananda</i>	308
Reviews and Notices	161, 262, 311, 355, 403, 453, 501, 548, 597, 645, 691
Roop Bhavani, The Life of Devi — <i>Aparna Dar</i>	291
Roop Bhavani, Ten Verses on the Divine Experiences of Devi — <i>Aparna Dar</i>	429, 480
Roop Bhavani's Ten Verses on Nirvana, Devi — <i>Aparna Dar</i>	327, 397
Sarada Devi, Open Appeal: For a postal stamp on the Holy Mother, Sri — <i>Dr. S.P. Chakravorty</i>	689
Sea, On the — <i>P. Shneidre</i>	225
Sen, Girish Chandra: Sri Ramakrishna Touched Them— <i>Swami Prabhananda</i>	320
Service of Humanity, Sri Ramakrishna and — <i>Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna Verma</i>	201
Service to God in Man and Personal Fulfilment, Swami Vivekananda's Contribution: — <i>Raj Prabhakar</i>	521
Shamas Faqir, Religious Mysticism: Some Observations on the Poetry of — <i>Prof. A.N. Dhar</i>	283
Shiva, The Dance of — <i>P. Shneidre</i>	432
Silence, Tune in to — <i>V. Dhurandhar</i>	345
Silent Communication, Our — <i>Sunil K. Sengupta</i>	378
Sister Nivedita: An Exemplary Approach, Plague in Calcutta (1899) and — <i>Drs. Mamata Ray and Anil Baran Ray</i>	296
Spiritual Consciousness: The Vedanta Point of View, Awakening of — <i>Swami Adiswarananda</i>	369
Spiritual Life for the Modern Age — <i>Swami Bhuteshananda</i>	16
Spoilsport, The — <i>L.B. Ahuja</i>	127
Sri Ramakrishna, Salutations to — <i>Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal'</i>	1
Students, From	120, 125, 143, 251
Sufism, Ethical Dimensions in — <i>Dr. Rama Prasad Banerjee</i>	103
<i>Swadeshi</i> Movement of Bengal, Sister Nivedita and the — <i>Dr. Anil Baran Ray</i>	679

Telling it Like it Was	394
Tribal Heartland, In the — <i>S.L. Ghosal</i>	243
Universal Gospel, The — <i>John Schlenck</i>	4
Universe, Doorstep of the — <i>Hiranyagarbha</i>	137
Vedanta, Science and — <i>S.K. Kar</i>	574
Vedanta, Living — <i>Swami Ranganathananda</i>	22
Vedanta Values in Everyday Life — <i>Eric Murphy</i>	578
Vedic India and Ancient Civilizations, New Light on — <i>Dr. N.S. Rajaram</i>	531, 584, 631
Vivekananda and Buddhism, Swami — <i>H. S. Sarkar</i>	517
Vivekananda and Islam, Swami — <i>H.S. Sarkar</i>	627
Vivekananda and the Hinduism of the Twenty-First Century — <i>Dr. Thillayvel Naidoo</i>	97
Vivekananda's Contribution, Indian Renaissance: Swami — <i>Dr. A. Usha Rani</i>	528
Vivekananda's Yoga Technology in a Multimedia Age — <i>Pravrajika Brahmnaprana</i>	31
Vivekananda, A Practical Visionary, Swami — <i>Sister Gargi</i>	470
Vivekananda, The Mystic, Swami — <i>Swami Tathagatananda</i>	179, 229
Vivekananda: The Poet — <i>Chhote Lal Khatri</i>	338
West Meets the East, The — <i>An Interview with the Venerable Ananda Meitreja</i>	55
Women's Movement, Spirituality and the — <i>Carol Flinders</i>	541
Women—Guardians of Values — <i>Dr. Sonal K. Amin</i>	186
Youth Forum: Synopsis of Question-Answer Sessions — <i>Swami Nikhileswarananda</i>	590

Author Index

Atmaramananda, Swami (Editorial)

Drug Abuse and the Hindu Scriptures	602
Idolatry?	506
Knowledge is Power	170
New Year Hopes	8
On Charity	314
Relationship with the Divine	362
Remembering Jesus Christ	650
Scriptural Study and Swamiji's Four A's	554
Sustaining Our Aspiration	218
The Twentieth Century Skill in Action	410
Those Mischievous Gods	266
Why 'Practical Vedanta'?	458

Adiswarananda, Swami

Awakening of Spiritual Consciousness: The Vedanta Point of View	369
--	-----

Aluja, L.B.

The Spoilsport	127
-----------------------	-----

Aluja, Jasbir Kaur

Guru Gobind Singh: A Saint-Soldier	483
---	-----

Ajayaprana, Pravrajika

Swami Vivekananda's Ideas and the Australian Society	111
---	-----

<i>Amin, Dr. Sonal K.</i>	
Women—Guardians of Values	186
<i>Ananda,</i>	
A Sister's Tribute to 'A Mission to the World'	65
<i>Ananda Meitreya, An Interview with the</i>	
The West Meets the East	55
<i>Bakshi, Rajni</i>	
A Great Leap Forward	138
<i>Balasundaram, S.</i>	
The Maya of Phenomenal Existence	226
<i>Bandyopadhyay, Trans. Dr. Sasanka Bluisan</i>	
Girish Chandra Ghosh: A Struggling Personality	658
<i>Banerjee, Dr. Rama Prasad</i>	
Ethical Dimensions in Sufism	103
<i>Bhasvatananda, Swami</i>	
A Review Article-The Nectar of Discourses on <i>Ishavasya-Upanishad</i>	308
<i>Bhuteshananda, Swami</i>	
Spiritual Life for the Modern Age	16
<i>Brahmaprana, Pravrajika</i>	
Vivekananda's Yoga Technology in a Multimedia Age	31
<i>Chakravorty, Dr. S.P.</i>	
Open Appeal: For a postal stamp on the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi	689
<i>Chew, Prof. Geoffrey</i>	
Quantum Theory, Unity and Diversity	494
<i>Dar, Aparna</i>	
Devi Roop Bhavani's Ten Verses on Nirvana	327, 397
Ten Verses on the Divine Experiences of Devi Roop Bhavani	429, 480
The Life of Devi Roop Bhavani	291
<i>Das, R.</i>	
Basic Programme of Reform for India and the World	234
<i>Dasgupta, Sanghamitra</i>	
Is the Question of Morality Irrelevant in Advaita Vedanta?	335
<i>De, Saswata</i>	
Mukti	191
<i>Dey, Dr. B.R.</i>	
Bondage	377
<i>Dhar, Prof. A.N.</i>	
Religious Mysticism: Some Observations on the Poetry of Shamas Faqir	283
<i>Dhurandhar, V.</i>	
Tune in to Silence	345
<i>Dighe, Shanti</i>	
Sri Ramakrishna's Vision (<i>Darshana</i>) as Conceived by Swami Vivekananda	192
Where Gods Reside	436

Flinders, Carol

Spirituality and the Women's Movement 541

Gambhirananda, Swami

Madhusudana Saraswati on the *Bhagavad-Gītā* 176, 222, 271, 317, 366, 412

Gargi, Sister

Swami Vivekananda, A Practical Visionary 470

Ghosal, S.L.

In the Tribal Heartland 243

Gopal, Ajit S.

A Sense of Boundarylessness 259

Gopinath, N.

Ramakrishna Embraced Them 570

Gopinath, Prof. V.

Krishna, My Beloved 475

Johns, Erik

A Mission to the World 68

'Hiranyagarbha'

Doorstep of the Universe 137

Kapoor, Dr. Satish K.

Review Article—Jesus Christ: An Artifice for Aggression 444

Kar, S.K.

Science and Vedanta 574

Kaul 'Kamal', Jaukinath

Salutations to Sri Ramakrishna 1

Khatri, Chhote Lal

Vivekananda: The Poet 338

Krishan, Y.

To What Extent Buddhism Repudiated Vedic Religion? 685

Lakhotia, Subhash

Practical Vedanta 644

Mandavia, Dr. Chetana

Feminism—Ideologies and Needs 145

Menon, C. Achutha

Incongruity 615

Mukerjee, Lalit K.

One 573

Muktidananda, Swami

Man-making Education 616, 665

Murphy, Eric

Some Meditation Practices in Australia Today 121

Vedanta Values in Everyday Life 578

1996	Author Index	I-7
<i>Naidoo, Dr. Thillayvel</i>		
Vivekananda and the Hinduism of the Twenty-First Century	...	97
<i>Nair, Kiran Ramachandran</i>		
Philosophical Foundation of Communication in Ancient India	...	197
<i>Nikhileswarananda, Swami</i>		
Youth Forum: Synopsis of Question-Answer Sessions	...	590
<i>Padmanabhan, Sujata</i>		
A Garden—My Mind	...	30
<i>Patri, Dr. Umesh</i>		
Travelling Through Emerson's India	...	622
<i>Prabhakar, Raj</i>		
Swami Vivekananda's Contribution: Service to God in Man and Personal Fulfilment	...	521
<i>Prabhananda, Swami</i>		
Sri Ramakrishna Touched Them:		
Asvinikumar Datta	...	273
Girish Chandra Sen	...	320
<i>Prescott, Richard Chambers</i>		
Cognitive Forces	...	82
The Cultic Mindset	...	424
<i>Rajaram, Dr. N.S.</i>		
New Light on Vedic India and Ancient Civilizations	...	531, 584, 631
<i>Raju, K.S.</i>		
The Nagarjuna Experience	...	85
<i>Ranganathananda, Swami</i>		
Living Vedanta	...	22
<i>Rani, Dr. A. Usha</i>		
Indian Renaissance: Swami Vivekananda's Contribution	...	528
Nature and Destiny of Man: Sri Aurobindo	...	433
<i>Ray, Dr. Anil Baran</i>		
Sister Nivedita and the <i>Swadeshi</i> Movement of Bengal	...	679
Plague in Calcutta (1899) and Sister Nivedita: An Exemplary Approach	...	296
<i>Ray, Dr. Mamata</i>		
Plague in Calcutta (1899) and Sister Nivedita: An Exemplary Approach	...	296
<i>Reddy, B.A.</i>		
Inter-Religious Dialogue: Prospects and Possibilities	...	128
<i>Sarkar, H. S.</i>		
Swami Vivekananda and Buddhism	...	517
Swami Vivekananda and Islam	...	627
<i>Schlenck, John</i>		
The Universal Gospel	...	4
A Mission to the World	...	68
<i>Sen, Sushama</i>		
Reminiscences of the Holy Mother	...	571

<i>Sengupta, Sunil K.</i>															
Our Silent Communication	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	378
<i>Shneidre, P.</i>															
On the Sea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	225
Remembering Sri Ramakrishna's Life and Teachings:															
On Surrendering Too Soon	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	657
The Spiritual Life of God	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	568
The Dance of Shiva	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	432
<i>Singh, Kanwaljit</i>															
Is God a Mere Social Necessity?	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	490
<i>Singh, Dr. Janardan</i>															
Life and Message of Mahavir the Jain Prophet	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	330
<i>Sivaramkrishna, Dr. M.</i>															
Review Article—Living Wisdom: Vedanta in the West	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	253
<i>Smith, Dr. Huston</i>															
Religion and Diversity	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	420
<i>Special Correspondent of Prabuddha Bharata, A</i>															
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	92
<i>Sridharananda, Swami</i>															
The Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad	...	...	131,	207,	249,	305,	346,	400,	446,	461,	509,	559,	608,	653	
<i>Sridurgananda, Swami</i>															
Sri Ramakrishna's Incarnation: A Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	476
<i>Tathagatananda, Swami</i>															
Swami Vivekananda, The Mystic	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	179,	229
<i>Toffler, Alvin</i>															
Nations of the Third Byte	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	173
<i>Toffler, Heidi</i>															
Nations of the Third Byte	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	173
<i>Utter, Robert P.</i>															
Beyond the Waterfall	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	674
<i>Verma, Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna</i>															
Sri Ramakrishna and Service of Humanity	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	201
<i>Vijayalakshmi, K.</i>															
Traditional Agriculture	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	390
<i>Wright, Gillian</i>															
Review Article: The Love Inside	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	539



उत्तिष्ठत
जाग्रत
प्राप्य
वरान्निबोधत



PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED

Vol. 101

DECEMBER 1996

No. 12

Divine Wisdom

REALIZATION OF THE DIVINE
(Sage Kapila to his mother Devahūti)

एवं हरौ भगवति प्रतिलब्धभावो
भक्त्या द्रवद्धृदय उत्पुलकः प्रमोदात्।
औत्कण्ठ्यबाष्पकलया मुहुरर्द्यमानस्तच्चापि
चित्तबडिशं शनकैर्वियुङ्क्ते॥

Through such meditation the devotee obtains absorbing love for the Lord. His heart melts in the sentiment of devotion and his tears of surpassing joy almost drown Him. The power of devotion then slowly melts the metallic hook of the mind which holds the Purusha in the bondage of Prakriti.

मुक्ताश्रयं यर्हि निर्विषयं विरक्तं निर्वाणमुच्छति
मनः सहसा यथार्चिः।
आत्मानमत्र पुरुषोऽव्यवधानमेकमन्वीक्षते
प्रतिनिवृत्तगुणप्रवाहः॥

Just as a flame gets extinguished when the oil, its sustenance, is exhausted, the mind is extinguished in the Lord when renunciation deprives it of the sense enjoyments that form its support. Then, being liberated from the current of the Gunas of Prakriti, the Jiva has a direct and unobstructed perception of the supreme Being, who is the One without a second.

सोऽप्येतया चरमया मनसो निकृत्या
तस्मिन्महिम्न्यवसितः सुखदुःखबाह्ये।

हेतुत्वमप्यसति कर्तरि दुःखयोर्यत्स्वात्मन्
विधत्त उपलब्धपरात्मकाष्ठः॥

Liberated for ever from the hold of the ignorance-tainted mind, the Jiva is established in the transcendent glory of the Spirit, which is beyond the relative joys and sorrows of this world. Thus having attained to this spiritual experience, he discovers that the cause of joy and sorrow lies in the ego-sense that arises from the mistaken identification of oneself with the impermanent body-mind combination born of Prakriti.

देहं च तं न चरमः स्थितमुत्थितं वा
सिद्धो विपश्यति यतोऽध्यगमत्स्वरूपम्।
दैवादुपेतमथ दैववशादपेतं वासो
यथा परिकृतं मदिरामदान्धः॥

A Jiva who has attained to this state is in his final embodiment, and he lives in complete detachment from the body. Established in his true spiritual self, he perceives the body as something that comes and goes, moves and falls, according to Prarabdha Karma, and cares little for it even as a man inebriated with wine pays no mind to his wearing-cloth.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 3.28.34-7

Remembering Jesus Christ

This is the month of Christmas. Our Season's Greetings to you all, and we also wish you a Merry Christmas.

The Christian world would now be getting ready to celebrate in memory of that great event, the birth of Jesus. A number of centres of the Ramakrishna Order, in India and abroad, shall also be worshipping Jesus that blessed night of the 25th. Though 'Christmas' stirs in most minds pictures of feasting, revelry, hangovers, etc., innumerable others will surely be then full of images of the inspiring incidents in Jesus' life and their perpetual significance.

What is this Power in these great prophets and saints that remains undiminished and fresh even centuries after them? So many charismatic great men and women have come and gone. Today most of them remain on some yellowing pages, sometimes on just a few lines, in libraries; some in fond memories; some as statues, unmoving, unmoved; some are best forgotten. But think of these prophets: It is clear that their power, the divine Power in flesh that they were, possesses an unignorable self-renewing capacity. Like the sun now and then paled by passing clouds, the uplifting radiance of these prophets occasionally appears to wane into irrelevance because of the twists and turns in social conditions. But soon humanity is once more compelled to look up to the cloud-dispelling, pride-dispelling wisdom of the prophets.

To the Christians, Christmas conveys a

wealth of meaning that is special in its own way because of their religious and cultural history. Naturally, others may not all be able to grasp in full their theological and doctrinal interpretations. Still, some meanings are universally understood, spontaneously, because they are human; besides, they form the common ground on which all the great teachers meet: self-sacrifice for others' welfare, all-embracing love, purity, simplicity and, basically, proof that God or the divine Reality can be communed with.

To the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda-Vedantists, too, Jesus and Christmas signify all these; and something more, because the two are linked mystically and coincidentally with the Ramakrishna Movement. For example, looking at the very source of the Movement, viz. Sri Ramakrishna, we read of his visions of Jesus and their mystical union. Then there is that wonderful 'coincidence' that occurred at Antpur on Christmas night. So, in a mood reflecting the universality of Sri Ramakrishna, let us dwell this time on these two important 'christian' events in the life of the Movement. Describing the first, Swami Saradanandaji writes:

...the mind of the Master again looked forward to the vision of the Divine Mother through another path. He had by that time become acquainted with Sambhucharan Mallick, who used to read the Bible to him. Thus he came to know of the pure life of Jesus and of the faith he had founded, and the desire to follow the Sadhanas of that path arose in his mind....The garden house of Jadunath Mallick is situated to the south of the

Kali temple at Dakshineswar. The Master used to go there now and then for a walk. ...and rest there for some time. There were some good pictures hanging on the walls of that room (parlour in that house). One of those pictures was that of the child Jesus in his mother's lap.

The Master used to say that he sat one day in that parlour, and was looking intently at that picture and thinking of the extraordinary life of Jesus, when he felt that the picture came to life, and that effulgent rays of light coming out from the bodies of the mother and the Child entered into his heart and changed radically all the ideas of his mind!...His love and devotion to the Devas and Devis vanished and, in their stead, a great faith in, and reverence for, Jesus and his religion occupied his mind. He began to see Christian worshippers offering incense and light before the image of Jesus in the Church, and his mind entered into the spirit of their longing for the Lord as expressed through their earnest prayers. The Master came back to Dakshineswar temple and remained constantly absorbed in the meditation of those inner happenings. He forgot altogether to go to the temple of the Divine Mother and pay obeisance to Her.

The waves of those ideas had a mastery over his mind in that manner for three days. At last, when the third day was about to close, the Master saw, while walking under the Panchavati, that a marvellous god-man of very fair complexion was coming towards him, looking steadily at him. As soon as the Master saw that person, he knew that he was a foreigner. He saw that his long eyes gave a wonderful beauty in his face, and that the tip of his nose, though a little flat, did not at all impair that beauty. The Master was charmed to see the extraordinary divine expression of that handsome face, and wondered who he was. Very soon the person approached him, and thereupon from the depth of the Master's pure heart came out with a ringing sound the words, 'Jesus the Christ! the great yogi, the loving Son of God, one with the Father, who gave his heart's blood and put up with endless tortures in order to deliver

man from sorrow and misery!' Jesus, the god-man, then embraced the Master and disappeared into his body, and the master entered into ecstasy, lost normal consciousness and remained identified for some time with the omnipresent Brahman with attributes.¹

As for the Antpur 'coincidence', that was when the spiritual mission of Sri Ramakrishna took the form of a supercharged nucleus, as it were. The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* provides a vivid description of that:

When the Baranagore Math was in this initial stage, ...an event occurred which clinched the determination of the boys to renounce the world. In the middle of December, Baburam's mother, Matangini Devi, invited the young monks to visit her native village, Antpur, during the Christmas vacation....Narendra, Baburam, Sharat, Shashi, Tarak, Kali, Niranjana, Gangadhar and Sarada boarded the Tarakeswar train at Howrah Station....They got down at Haripal station, and went to Antpur in a carriage. Baburam's mother received them as warmly as though they were her own children.

In the calm and quiet of the village, the spiritual fire in the young monks blazed up into a conflagration. Narendra's enthusiasm fanned the flames. The spirit of the Master as it were spoke and worked through him. He was intensely possessed by the vision of the sannyasi's life, and would cry out, 'Let man-making be the goal of our lives! Let us make this our only spiritual discipline! Away with vain learning! Let not the glamour of the world captivate our minds even for a moment! Realization of God is the one and only thing in life! That is what Sri Ramakrishna's life represented! We must realize God!'

Inspired by these thoughts and fired by a oneness of purpose, the young men became aware

1. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master* (Mylapore, Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1978), vol. 1, pp. 338-39.

of a sense of unity—a feeling that they were all linked by some wonderful spiritual power. During their stay at Antpur they seemed to grow into one body, one mind and one soul. The days passed in sadhana. Ramakrishna was in their minds; his name on their lips. Upon all alike there seemed to descend a spirit of renunciation, a desire to take the sannyasi's vow, each in the presence of the others. The monastic spirit seemed to be intensified in their hearts, both for their own liberation and for the good of the world. Each disciple saw in his brother-disciples a world of spiritual force; and that vision intensified the love among them. This was as it should have been, for the Master's spirit was destined to be perpetuated, not through one or several individual disciples having disciples of their own, which is what usually happens, but in a definite organized form.

Thus at Antpur, in still hours, subtle things were happening, knitting the brothers together. It all found expression one night before a huge Dhuni (sacred fire) in the compound. Overhead was the clear night sky, and all around was quiet. Meditation lasted a long time. When a break was made Narendra began to tell the story of Jesus, beginning with the mystery of his birth, through to his death and resurrection. Through his eloquence, the brother-disciples could catch something of the apostolic fervour that had impelled Paul to spread the Christian gospel far and wide in the face of adversities. Narendra charged them to become Christs themselves, and so aid in the redemption of the world; to realize God and to deny themselves as Jesus had done. Standing there before the sacred fire, their faces lit up by the flames, the crackling of the wood the sole disturbing sound, they took the vows of renunciation before God and one another. The very air was vibrant with their ecstatic fervour. Strangely, the monks discovered afterwards that all this had happened on Christmas-eve!

In later years, Swami Shivananda (Taraknath), recalling these days, used to say: 'As a matter of fact, our resolve to become organized became firm at Antpur. The Master had

already made us sannyasis. That attitude was strengthened at Antpur.' ²

More 'christian' connections are of course there, involving the lives of some of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples. However, a full reference is not our intention here. We merely wished to share our Christmas meditations with our readers to conclude with two points. First, we should all note that both the narrations above reveal one of the, rather THE Power that makes all prophetic movements not only perennial but also life-giving: the power of Renunciation. This has got so many synonyms—unselfishness, love for God, self-transcendence, detachment, and so on. But their common vital message is one, that the key to lasting happiness is in Renunciation alone. Its other closest synonym is Service; for, renunciation in the prophets has always flowed towards us as service, self-emptying or self-giving. Now, Renunciation and Service have together another name: Love. Just as parental love manifests as their constant concern and working for their children, likewise does Love, God, divine Father, Mother, reach us through these prophets—so that we may ourselves imbibe it and manifest it for the common good. This is the Power, in its dual aspects, that has worked through the prophets and incarnations, from Sri Rama down. Its recent embodiment was Sri Ramakrishna, considered as such by us as by numberless more. As often said, he was that and also one in whom stood contemporized the specialties of each of the world's previous prophets.

Then the other point: This way of remembering Jesus Christ, together with our private meditation on all the other great

(Continued on page 656)

2. His Eastern and Western Disciples, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 195–7.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

SWAMI SRIDHARANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमास-
मचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च।
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुत-
मासप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान् हिनस्ति॥

*Yasyāgnihotram-adarśam-apaurṇamāsam-
acāturmāsyam-anāgrayaṇam-
atithivarjitam ca;
Ahutam-avaiśvadevam-avidhinā hutam-
āsaptamān-stasya lokān hinasti. (I.ii.3.)*

It (i.e., the Agnihotra) destroys the seven worlds of that man whose sacrifice is without the darśa (new moon) and paurṇamāsa (full moon) rites, devoid of cāturmāsyā (four-month sacrifices, three in a year) bereft of āgrayaṇa (harvest sacrifice), unblest and unattended by guests, or not performed (offered) at all, without the ceremony to all the gods, or performed perfunctorily (not according to rule, without care or interest).

Agnihotra has to be performed perfectly; then it gives results. But if not performed perfectly, something is lost. Not only is the Agnihotra to be performed daily, but it has further concomitants; darśa, paurṇamāsa, cāturmāsyā, and āgrayaṇa sacrifices, and atithi-sevā are the other requisites for the Agnihotra. Further, fast and vigil have to be kept in order to make the yāga fruitful. One who does not do so, violates the instruction, which is not only to control one's tongue and greed to eat, but also to free oneself from all such other weaknesses.

Similarly, if during the cāturmāsyā days one does not do the preparatory acts, moves about unsheltered from the rain, and does

not avoid hazards to one's health, then *tapasyā* (austerity) becomes impossible. So, one must choose a place and stay there till the weather is bright and there is protection of health for the purpose of *dharma-sādhana* (religious practice). *Āgrayaṇa* are rituals to be performed in autumn and spring with newly harvested corn; these have to be performed to complete one's *Agnihotra-yāga*. While conducting one's life thus under the guidance of the *karma-kāṇḍa*, with full attention to the details of the rituals etc., if anybody comes seeking help or hospitality, it is required of one not to deny him. Because one is expected to enlarge one's heart, become less selfish and more interested in others' wellbeing. So one must be alert to pay due attention and respect to guests, whether desirable or not. A real *Agnihotri* (performer of *Agnihotra*) has no right or freedom to say 'no' to anybody coming to his door with any request.

The suggestion is this: let not the performer of *Agnihotra* assume such self-importance as to stop thinking for others, because ultimately he and all the rest are one in Brahman. So he cannot refuse a person seeking material, moral, or spiritual aid. His *Agnihotra* will go to waste if he does not follow the ritualistic rules due to boredom or tiredness or the feeling that he made a mistake in committing himself to this life-long code.

In general, people do not want to undergo the called-for discipline and self-control. But an *Agnihotri* must cultivate modesty by thinking that he shall accomplish all

his tasks, and that only because of divine grace. Otherwise he denies the Divine in his heart and swells up with ego. If the *karmakāṇḍī* fails to live up to this exacting standard, and works in a slipshod lethargic manner, this spirit will reflect in all his activities. In course of time, his observance of this Vedic dharma becomes slack. Thus India became a nation of indisciplined persons. Such a person's chances of reaching the seven *lokas* (levels of awareness) get destroyed. A person who, due to lack of determination and will, fails to perform the rituals he has promised to do destroys the possibility of improving his level of awareness from the *bhūloka* to the *bhuvārloka* to the *svargaloka*; that is, he destroys the possibility of raising himself from the 'nether-world', because he is now a slave to his passions and moods. He impedes the process of evolution from an ordinary human being to the level of the Divine.

Another school says that this also means that the ancestors of this person will be sufferers and so also his progeny, for three successive generations. He totally ruins himself, his three previous generations (father, grandfather and great-grandfather), and his future three generations (son, grandson and great-grandson). They will suffer the consequences of his negligence. This does not appear very rational, for, why should others suffer for his mistakes? However, we must remember that because of the good deeds of his ancestors he inherited something—the noble desire to perform the *Agnihotra-yāga*. This is a part of his *saṁskāra* (past impressions). But if he fails to maintain the tradition the way it should be, he is being ungrateful to his forefathers, besides setting a very bad example for his children. Instead of creating self-discipline and will-power, he has really bloated his ego and brought moral ruin upon his lineage. According to the scriptures, however, the meaning is that one stops the further evolution of one's

spiritual life by not asserting one's discrimination and dispassion.

काली कराली च मनोजवा च
सुलोहिता या च सुधूम्रवर्णा।
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरुचि च देवी
लेलायमाना इति सप्तजिह्वाः॥

*Kālī karālī ca mano-javā ca
sulohitā yā ca sudhūmravarṇā;
Sphuliṅginī viśvarucī ca devī
lelāyamānā iti sapta-jihvāḥ. (I.ii.4.)*

The black, the terrible, the swift-as-thought, the very-red, the very-smoky-coloured, the crackling, and the all-formed (gleaming)—these are the seven so-called flickering tongues (of flames).

The tongues of the sacrificial fire are being identified by the colour of the flames. When the combustion of the fuel is incomplete and carbon-monoxide is not totally burnt, the core of the flame is effulgent (reddish) but the lower border has a bluish, blackish mark (*kālī karālī*). The *manojavā* flame is bright like the red hibiscus and swift as thought. The sun-flame is absolutely red (*sulohitā*); while another flame is very smoky in nature (*sudhūmravarṇā*), though at the top there is the glare of the flame. The *sphuliṅganī* is that which crackles with sparks. The *viśvarucī* fire is very shining. A person who has the knowledge of these seven tongues of flame, first identifies these flames in his sacrificial fire, and only then he performs the *Agnihotra* as enjoined.

The previous mantra (I.ii.3.) eliminated those people who do not make best use of these directives. In the next mantra, the fruit accruing to those persons who make their best use is mentioned.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु
यथाकालं चाहृतयो ह्याददायन्।

तं नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो
यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः॥

*Eteṣu yaś-carate bhrājamāneṣu
yathā-kālān cā-hutayo hyādadāyan;
Taṁ nayantytāḥ sūryasya raśmayo
yatra devānān patir-
eko'dhivāsaḥ. (I.ii.5.)*

If one performs the rites in these shining flames and offers the oblations at the proper time, these sacrifices turn into rays of the sun and lead him to where (Indra) the one Lord of the gods presides over all.

Here is described symbolically how the oblations (*āhuti*) lead a person to heaven according to the *adrṣṭa* he has created. When the tongues of the flame are dancing, i.e., when the fire is fully lit and the fuel burns bright, the person performs the rituals with the prescribed offerings to the flames. Then the flames leap skyward and merge with the rays of the sun, which in turn take him to the abode of the deity, Indra, who presides over all the gods. The suggestion here is that Indra was then supposed to be the supreme Ruler of the universe.

The above is a graphic description. But what is actually happening is that the sacrificer is creating the *karma-phala* in the shape of *adrṣṭa*. A perfectly performed oblation will give its result. This is kept in the safe-custody of the supreme Ruler of the heavens, and is handed over when He dispenses that the person should have it, i.e., at the time of the death of the sacrificer. He does not give my results to another, nor another's result to me. The common doubt as to where *adrṣṭa* is stored is answered here: in God's treasury till the 'proper time', when it is given back to the right person.

This practice is also followed in a symbolic manner when a person enters monasticism after a special fire-sacrifice called

virajā-homa, in which he severs his connections with the world; that is, he symbolically becomes dead to the world, in the presence of the fire representing the Divine and in the presence of a number of sannyasins who bear witness to the vows he takes. All social dues are repaid symbolically through rites. With all debts to everybody cleared, there is no more give and take left. No further social obligations remain to be fulfilled, not even *piṇḍa-dāna*—yearly ritual offerings to one's forefathers. For, he has entered the life of sannyasa—total renunciation of the non-Self, the world, for the Self. The body will continue as long as the *prārabdha* lasts, but he is not to enter into any new social or personal commitments. The *śrāddha* (obsequies) of one's parents are performed (even if they are living) before one's sannyāsa, and he asks Lord Nārāyaṇa to hold the *piṇḍa* (offerings) in safe custody and give to his parents after their death. One's own *śrāddha* is also performed and the *piṇḍa* is laid down at one's own feet, signifying clearance of one's debt to one's own body. The essential idea of this rite is that a person should be totally freed from all social obligations which may otherwise be obstacles in the path to his spiritual unfoldment. Then he becomes casteless, classless, free from all bondages, as pure and uncontaminable as fire. Following this rite, he carries on the rest of his life as a dedication, as a sacrifice, to reach the ultimate goal.

The idea behind this is that whether you are a *jñāna-kāṇḍī* or a *karma-kāṇḍī*, the essence is to keep open all possibilities, to grow to the maximum extent, whether in this life itself through *jñāna-sādhana*, or after the fall of the body through *karma-sādhana*. If we have intentionally done bad deeds, not worthy of human conduct, then we are sure that the axe will fall on us at some time or another. But the wise avoid those bad deeds, knowing their unavoidable bad results. So the idea behind this verse is that *karma* and *karma-phala* are related by the infallible law

that action must bear fruit today, tomorrow or some day. Thus, the proper and the improper performance of *Agnihotra* together with their result has been explained clearly.

एह्येहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः
सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति।
प्रियां वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य
एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः॥

*Ehy-ehīti tam-āhutayaḥ suvarcasah
sūryasya raśmibhir-yajamānam vahanti;
Priyām vācam-abhivadantyo'rçayantya
eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukrto
brahmalokaḥ. (I.ii.6.)*

*Addressing through pleasant words,
'Come, come. This is your meritorious, well-
earned Brahma-loka, i.e., virtuous path lead-
ing to heaven,' and offering him adoration,
the scintillating, splendid offerings carry the
sacrificer along the rays of the sun.*

How is this sacrificer welcomed there? Is he welcomed with great fanfare, warmth and appreciation, or is he an unwelcome guest? A person who has performed the duties in *karma-kāṇḍa* perfectly, like a disciplined person, is most warmly and affectionately welcomed in the abode of Indra, when he casts off his body. *Ehi ehi* means welcome (*svāgatam*). Like the sun sitting in his chariot drawn by seven horses (colours of light), the *yajamāna*, the performer of the sacrifice, is given an equal amount of importance, admiration and adoration, and carried to the Brahmaloka. If he had not done anything wrong willfully, his mistakes are pardoned and he earns his reward for doing his ritualistic duties and creating *adṛṣṭa*. The *lakṣyārtha* is that by the sheer merit of the deeds he reaches the abode of Īśvara.

(to be continued)

Remebering Jesus Christ

(Continued from page 652)

teachers and Sri Ramakrishna, is a prelude to a gearing up for the celebrations beginning next year. They will be in connection with the centenary of the Ramakrishna Mission (founded on 1 May 1897), of the Ramakrishna Movement, destined to broadcast that Power Sri Ramakrishna was. We wish that our readers also, joining us in our meditations, should prepare themselves to participate in those momentous celebrations—momentous because the Movement's completion of its hundred years is a deeply touching reminder that it is steadily unfolding its powerful prophetic potential. Besides, these celebrations will have another theme—that nation-awakening event which in fact preceded the founding of the Ramakrishna Mission, viz. Swami Vivekananda's first return to India, on Tues-

day, 26 January 1897, after participating in the World Parliament of Religions. Together with this invitation to you to join the programmes, the details of which should soon be available from the branches of the Ramakrishna Order, we convey another happy news: The *PB* of January '97, and possibly that of May '97, will be a special issue marking the two centenaries. □

By means of action a man fulfils his various desires. Therefore action is in harmony with ignorance and cannot destroy it.

—Self-Knowledge, 152

On Surrendering Too Soon *

P. SHNEIDRE

(Continued from the October 1996 issue)

Is it possible to reach perfection through one's own struggle, without the grace of God? And if one does have the grace of God, does he still have to struggle? It's natural to ask these questions, and Ramakrishna had a lot to say on both sides.

On the one hand we find him saying, 'I have cooked the food; now sit down and eat.' Or: 'The mould is ready—pour your awareness into it.' 'If you cannot do anything, then give me your power of attorney,' and so on. Then he'll say, 'Give up all desires one by one; then you will succeed'; 'Be like a castoff leaf blown by the wind'; 'Give up lust and greed and call on God'; 'I have done all sixteen parts; do at least one-sixteenth of it yourself.'

A lack of familiarity with the dual nature of the master's teachings could easily lead to confusion. One day at Dakshineswar, we were having a long discussion about free-will with a friend, now Swami Niranjanananda, and finally went to Ramakrishna to end the argument. He enjoyed the show, as always, but after amusing himself with our amateur philosophy, he suddenly turned serious.

'Is there anyone who has free-will, or anything like it? It is by God's will alone that everything has always happened and always will.'

'In the long run, man understands. A cow tied to a post by a 20-foot rope is free to

stand right next to the post or 20 feet away. It's the same with the will of man: It only goes so far. A man ties up his cow thinking, "Let her lie down, stand or move around wherever she wants to within this area."

'Similarly, God gives man some power, and also the freedom to use as much or as little of it as he likes; this is why he feels free. But his rope is attached to the post. And remember: If you pray to Him humbly, He might move you to another post. Or perhaps He will keep you where you are, but lengthen your rope. Who knows? He might even untie you completely!'

We replied, 'Then there's no point in practising religious disciplines. All you have to do is say, "Whatever I do is according to His will."'

The master said, 'What good does it do to say so? You've filled your mouth with empty words. You can reach for a rose and say, "There is no thorn, no pain", but if you get pricked you'll say "ouch!" soon enough. If it were in the hands of man to practise sadhana, everybody would do it.'

'One thing, though: He doesn't give more power to someone who hasn't made good use of what He has given. This is why individual effort and perseverance are necessary. Don't you see? Everyone has to make some effort, however small, before getting God's grace. When you do, the experiences of ten lives are crowded, through His grace, into one, and then all come to an end. But you must make the effort.' □

* See our introductory note to his previous article in this series in the PB October issue.

Girish Chandra Ghosh: A Struggling Personality

Translated by

DR. SASANKA BHUSAN BANDYOPADHYAY

How Girish Chandra's waywardness due to a series of mishaps, his struggles and prayerfulness were finally transformed into total self-surrender to Sri Ramakrishna was lucidly portrayed in an article in Bengali by Sri Arindam Das, which appeared in Udbodhan, the Bengali Journal of the Ramakrishna Order, (vol. 96, Jyeshtha issue, May 1994, p. 234). An edited English rendering of that article prepared on the advice of Swami Ranganathananda, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, by Dr. Sasanka Bhusan Bandyopadhyay is presented here, with due consent from the Editor, Udbodhan.

I

An eminent poet and dramatist, Girish Chandra Ghosh was born at a time when the new epoch was about to be replaced by the old one. High waves of western education and culture were lashing heavily against the Indian sub-continent. Born in this age of constant change, Girish Chandra could not escape its influence. Opposite moods of atheism and faith in religion worked like warp and woof in the fabric of his life, and finally his ascent to the highest stage of faith—through a path of great struggle—did contribute to Girish Chandra's life a special dimension which is rare in the domain of spirituality.

From his boyhood Girish Chandra possessed an excellent intellect, a great love for learning, a concentrated mind and a deep devotion to duty. Independent-spirited as Girish Chandra was, he could not tolerate any bondage or obstruction. He used to say: 'An animal can be subdued by whipping, but not man.' Having deep faith in his own

strength, all his dealings were in a kingly fashion. Both outwardly and inwardly, he was completely free from crookedness, and was bold and energetic. Whatever he thought to be right, he would unhesitatingly carry out without paying heed to criticism from others. But it would be wrong to think that he was not truthful. In his boyhood or in youth, even if he had done something wrong, he would never tell a lie for fear of punishment. He would, rather, tell the truth and accept the punishment. But the environment was not in his favour. The result was deadly. Srish Chandra Motilal writes: 'We have heard him saying that in the prime of his youth, his relatives and friends made a laughing stock of him for his having refused to acquire a property by telling a lie; such an action was considered by them to be utter foolishness on his part. He used to say that, for such acts of truthfulness, instead of praise, disgrace was everywhere in store for him. This had a very bitter effect on his life. From then on, he tried to show himself to be in no way less intelligent than anybody in this corrupt world; this was one of the causes of his waywardness in later life.'¹

1. 'Bhakta Girishchandra', *Udbodhan*, B.S. 1319, vol. 15, p. 134.

During his early youth, temperamental Girish did not have a suitable guardian who could guide a young man, full of vigour as he was, in the right direction. The superficial grandeur of the material culture of the West greatly affected the minds of the local youth. Naturally Girish's mind, too, felt the thrust of that wave. Observing the prevalence of reason and leanings towards atheism amongst the educated youth on the one hand, and the dogmatism and unwholesome practices of the brahmin priests on the other, Girish took atheism to be superior to theism. With him as the centre, a band of wayward young boys grew up in the locality. Along with social welfare activities they took to drinking, wantonness, arrogance and incorrigible obstinacy. Drunkenness, debauchery, immorality and immodesty deeply stained his character. As a result, even those who received help from him did not like him. His good name was tarnished by his bad deeds.

To Sri Ramakrishna it was revealed that Girish was born with some of Bhairava's attributes. In Indian mythology, Bhairava is the chief attendant of Lord Shiva and the cremation ground is his abode. A similar situation is observed in Girish Chandra's life too. While death feasted around, Girish Chandra was at the centre, all alone. That is the great tragedy in Girish Chandra's life. Sankariprasad Basu writes, 'A life of greater misfortune than that of Girish Chandra is seldom possible. While looking at the mad enjoyments of Girish Chandra in his outward life, a common man does not delve into its depths. Had he done so, he would have found the place filled with the darkness of ill luck.'² Let us not enter into that 'dark' history.

II

Girish Chandra was the eighth child of his mother Raimohini Debi. On his birth, there was joy in the house all around. But what a pitiless irony of destiny! The mother being laid up with severe illness, the newborn baby was deprived of breast feeding by the mother. The maid-servant Uma, Bagdi by caste, played the role of Yashoda. Besides that, Girish was deprived of his mother's caresses too. When he was ten years old, there started a life-long procession of death at home, beginning with the death of his eldest brother, Nityagopal. Next year his mother passed away, giving birth to a still-born baby. When he was aged only fourteen, his father Nilkamal Ghosh died. While a child, Girish lost his immediate elder sister Prasannakali, who loved him very much. Within a year and a half of this event, his fifth sister Krishnarangini died. At the age of twenty-three he became a father, but that too for a few months, because his son died within a few months. Next year another sister, Krishnakamini, died. She was next to his eldest sister. After some time his third brother Kanailal died immediately after marriage.

Girish Chandra had respite from bereavement for the next six years. But, as soon as he was thirty, dark times of misfortune descended again on his life. After giving birth to her next child, Girish Chandra's wife suffered from ailments related to childbirth. The child died. Within nine months three others also died, including—his youngest brother Kshirodechandra, his third sister Krishnabhamini, and his wife Promodini. Girish was overwhelmed with severe grief. Now everything around appeared dark to him. In the midst of this dreadful procession of death, a question arose in his mind: 'Is life so devoid of compassion? Should I not then question the existence of God?' To Girish, full of vigour, this did not remain a mere question, but took the

2. Girishchandra Ghosh, Introduction: *Thakur Sri Ramakrishna O Swami Vivekananda*, B.S. 1389, pp. 39–40.

shape of revolt. He became, as it were, the 'Kālāpahār' (Black Rock) of the nineteenth century. The day before the Durga Puja ceremony began, Girish Chandra, in a fit of drunkenness, took an axe and smashed the image of Durga to pieces and buried them underground!

To allay the severe burning sensation caused by these bereavements, Girish Chandra tried to pay deeper attention to his own field of activity, that is, the theatrical world. His performance, his drama and his songs charmed the theatre fans. His rise to the position of 'Father of the Modern Stage of Bengal'³ was gradually apparent. From the contemporary eminent playwrights, novelists, actors, newspapers and the common man to the specialist, every one was vocal in praising Girish. But in spite of such honours, powers, and a wide range of activities, his turbulent mind could not be pacified, for he was as yet unaware of the nectar of Divine Love. Like the musk-deer of Sri Ramakrishna's parable, without exploring the mass of spiritual treasure lying within himself, he was running on the path of atheism. As such, he had to turn back without success.

But at times he would feel the pricks of conscience, the need for self-correction. Exceptional knowledge and creative power coupled with an indomitable thirst for enjoyment manifested in Girish at the same time. Some indications of his mental state at the age of twenty-three are available from the diary of his neighbour and friend, Kalinath Bose: 'At noon Girish and I, sitting in my coach, had a talk "on the moral conduct of life". Girish admitted that he was leading a bad life and was degenerating himself, but wished to correct himself....I note this to mark the time a change came on him. Girish admits there is happiness in

reliance on God.'⁴

When Girish crossed the age of thirty and was on an assignment to Bhagalpur for his employer, Fry-Berger & Co., he fell into a dark cave one day while strolling with his friends. Unable to find a way out of the cave, his friends thereupon remarked that such a danger had befallen them because Girish did not believe in God. Thus he was left with no alternative but to pray to the Lord Madhusudan, the destroyer of dangers, for their exit from the cave. At the instance of his friends, Girish had, at last, to pray, and the path was found in a strange way. Coming out of the cave he said: 'Dear brothers, today I prayed to him under dire circumstances. But in future, if ever I can take his name in full faith, then only shall I take it. Otherwise I will not; even if a more fierce danger or fear of death was to be confronted.'⁵ Girish Chandra knew that, to seek God's refuge with the hope of getting something is mean-

Girish Chandra knew that to seek God's refuge with the hope of getting something is mean-mindedness; and having full faith in him is the best way of getting him nearer. Because of this understanding of spiritual values, he could reach in his later days the highest stage of faith.

mindfulness; and having full faith in him is the best way of getting him nearer. Because of this understanding of spiritual values, he could in his later days reach the highest stage of faith. This was the fountainhead of

4. Abinashchandra Gangopahdyay, ed. Swapan Mazumder, *Girish Chandra*, (Calcutta: De's Publishing, 1977), p. 99 (original in English).

5. Swami Gambhirananda, *Sri Ramakrishna Bhaktamalika* (Calcutta: Udbodhan, B.S. 1371), 2nd Part, p. 257.

3. Ibid. quoted on p. 15.

the 'Five quarters and five sixteenths' (or limitless) faith which he later sustained. Outward morality is not always an indication of inward spirituality of man; rather, even if there be no expression of outward morality, or even if there is a manifestation of the opposite tendency, if spirituality is latent within man, then a return to his true nature takes place when he comes in contact with a proper spiritual seeker or preceptor. This truth is manifest in Girish Chandra's leaving his house once, in early life, with tears of pain of separation from Lord Krishna; his breaking the image of the Goddess and burying it under the earth in his middle age; and putting his sole trust in Sri Ramakrishna in respect of everything he had, on coming in contact with him in his later life.

After his second marriage around 1876, Girish was attacked by the deadly disease of cholera. Though feeling that death was near, Girish saw, through his inner eyes, an affectionate mother-form coming near his head and giving him *prasāda*, food offered to the deity. He ate it and was miraculously saved, even after hearing the footsteps of imminent death. That this mother-form was none other than that of the Holy Mother was recognized by him when he saw her at Jairambati after a gap of many years.⁶ After this event there was a great tussle in his mind. Narrating that state of mind he wrote: 'I began to deliberate over the action-cause relations, and traced the cause of this action which delivered me from danger. Still, now I have doubts, but I can no longer be bold enough to deny emphatically the existence of God. A desire for search was roused. Flow of events are sometimes conducive to faith, at other times to doubt. With whomsoever I discuss, the same answer comes forth, namely, nothing is achievable without the instructions from a preceptor. But my rea-

soning could not accept a human being as preceptor. Specially because a preceptor has to be saluted with the holy incantation—"The preceptor is the Creator, the preceptor is the Preserver, the preceptor is also the Destroyer, Lord Shiva." How can such a salutation be made to a human being? This would be hypocrisy! But doubt produces a tremendous impulse. At heart a heavy tussle set in. That state is beyond description....The impulse of thought sometimes chokes the breath. The memory of evil deeds flares up frequently and makes the darkness of the heart deeper.'⁷

Girish Chandra ran to the temple of Lord Taraknath at Tarakeswar. He continues: 'I prayed to Lord Tarakeswar, "If it is absolutely necessary, may he himself be my preceptor." I learnt that sometimes Lord Mahesvara takes the human form to initiate his devotee. If I am graced in this way, then only my being initiated is possible, otherwise I am helpless. But where is Lord Taraknath? If I never find him, then what shall I do? I shall take Lord's name once every morning, if that be sufficient; then it is well and good.'⁸ As time rolled on, eagerness, devotion and bliss were roused in Girish Chandra's life. During this time he said to a friend: 'Lord Taraknath's glory makes me feel that I am being advanced by a century within a span of one day only.'⁹ He went to Kalighat and prayed to Mother Kali with extreme devotion, saying: 'People say, without being initiated by a preceptor one cannot, by himself, get a vision of the Lord of the Universe and Thee also. If that be true, then fulfil my desire by making the right preceptor available to me.'¹⁰ Soon the

7. 'Sri Sri Ramakrishna Prasanga', *Girish Granthabali*, B.S. 1335, 3rd Part, pp. 276-7.

8. Ibid. pp. 271-2.

9. 'Bhakta Girishchandra', *Udbodhan*, B.S. 1319, vol. 15, p. 197.

10. Ibid. p. 200.

6. Ibid. p. 58.

prayers to Mahadeva and Mother Kali began to bear fruits.

It was 21 September 1884. A hackney carriage from the flour mill of Mahendra Mukherjee of Hati Bagan came along the Beadon Street and stopped in front of the Star Theatre. At that time Girish was strolling in the compound of the theatre. Mahen-

Once Sri Ramakrishna told Girish Chandra: 'People will wonder at the very sight of you.' Truly, the same Girish Chandra who once said about himself, 'The ground where I sit is impure', was saluted by Swamiji by touching his feet, saying, 'Glory be to your faith.' Swami Turiyananda said: 'Girish Chandra was the most religious amongst all of us.'

dra Mukherjee approached and said: 'Paramahansa Deva has come from Dakshinesvar to watch the play, "Chaitanya Lila".'

That was an important moment in time. It was like the poignant moment before sunrise: The theatre in Bengal was then a despised place to many, because of public women being in it. And into that entered the greatest spiritual personality of contemporary India. This was not all—that day set a unique example in the spiritual history for all time to come. It was God's blessings in the form, 'May you be conscious of the Spirit', showered on the neglected and the despised.

Girish Chandra was wonderstruck. Till then he was burning in the fire of doubts, and the pillar of his arrogance was standing tall. But how could this divine event be ignored? Girish was greatly disturbed. He felt that a hidden current of love for Sri Ramakrishna was flowing through his heart. He tried to ignore it, to keep away from Sri

Ramakrishna, but failed. He told Sri Ramakrishna: 'I have not come to hear your words, I can speak out cartloads of such words. They are of no use to me. Rather do something which might change me.'¹¹ Such frankness pleased Sri Ramakrishna, and he assured him, saying, 'This drunkenness will pass away.' Girish noticed that Sri Ramakrishna surpassed even him in 'drunkenness'. Sri Ramakrishna took the hands of Girish Chandra, who was inebriated with wine, and sang:

I do not drink wine, I say
'Glory be to Kali' and
take nectar only.
My absorbed mind makes me
appear drunk,
the wine-intoxicated call me so.

While singing, Sri Ramakrishna was, as if, filling up the empty wine glass of Girish with the nectar of Divine Love. Girish Chandra became completely absorbed in that kind of addiction. In the fire of that love, his pride, arrogance, conflict and all other blemishes of the mind were burnt out. He told Sri Ramakrishna: 'All your actions are beyond normal rules.' 'What I had been and what I am now—this change is simply the result of my meditation on Thyself. Earlier, laziness overpowered me. That laziness has now turned into self-surrender to God! I suffered from committing sins, but now I am free from all egotism.'¹²

Once Sri Ramakrishna told Girish: 'People will wonder at the very sight of you.'¹³ Truly, the same Girish Chandra who once said about himself, 'The ground where

11. Quoted in 'Ramakrishna O Thar Shisyagan', Mandal Book House, B.S. 1393, p. 217.

12. Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita, Sri Makathita, (Calcutta: Udbodhan, 1987), pp. 1140—1.

13. Ibid. p. 908.

I sit is impure',¹⁴ was saluted by Swamiji by touching his feet, saying, 'Glory be to your faith.'¹⁵ Swami Turiyananda said: 'Girish Chandra was the most religious amongst all of us.'¹⁶ His inner spiritual consciousness was acknowledged by Sri Ramakrishna when he said: 'All these are the results of the good efforts you made in your previous births.'¹⁷ Earlier we saw that even when Girish was under the spell of extreme atheism, though temporary, he experienced the qualms of conscience. Only a conducive environment and a proper preceptor were needed. That necessity was fulfilled at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna.

Incidentally let us recall one event. Once when Sri Ramakrishna went to the Star Theatre to watch a drama, and an inebriated Girish Chandra had abused him and shown disrespect, two devotees of Sri Ramakrishna were much aggrieved and excited. But Ramachandra Dutta, the jewel among devotees, said to Sri Ramakrishna: 'As the serpent, Kaliya, told Sri Krishna, "The lord has given me poison. Where shall I get nectar?" so is the case with Girish Chandra. Where will he get nectar?'¹⁸ It is quite natural that the disrespectful behaviour of Girish should produce such a reaction in the mind of a devotee like Ramachandra Dutta, who was completely dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. But can we decry the comparison of Girish with Kaliya as unreasonable? We have already noted what unbearable bereavements and hostile environment he had to face; we

also know what a dreadful poison the society presented to him. In spite of all these, his spiritual consciousness was not lost; rather it rose in full glory, the history of which is known to all of us.

If we judge the words of Ramachandra Dutta in this light, we clearly see that his analysis was only partial; for Girish offered to Sri Ramakrishna not only poison, but some nectar as well. As a result of that offer the human race received the heavenly blessings of Sri Ramakrishna in these words: 'May your consciousness be roused.' Christopher Isherwood writes: 'The comparison of Girish with a poisonous snake had not been logical. Girish's waywardness had been largely exaggerated. To the devotees, who saw him when he was advanced in age, Girish was a pure soul. Girish wanted to show how perfectly effective was the influence of Sri Ramakrishna's grace, in his life'.¹⁹

Truly, the life of Girish became one of the important centres of learning for ordinary people. He never forsook any one of his early companions. He took all of them along with him as he moved along the path shown by Sri Ramakrishna. Whoever came in contact with him was shown the way to the abode of deathlessness, the abode of his Lord at Dakshineswar. One actress, Vinodini, said: 'Generally speaking father (as Vinodini addressed Girish) created a new era. Women in utter distress and poverty, who would otherwise have been forced into the depths of sin, could save themselves holding on to the theatre. But father did not stop there. He brought all of us to Sri Ramakrishna's hermitage, and got them saturated with his life-giving words.... Father used to say, 'Do not fear, he (Sri Ramakrishna) himself will teach us all!'²⁰ Girish thought that

14. Quoted in *Sri Ramakrishna O Banga Ranga Mancha* by Nalini Ranjan Chattopadhyay, Mandal Book House, 1978, p. 63.

15. *Girish Chandra*, p. 224.

16. Dhana Gopal Mukhopadhyay, *Sri Ramakrishna: Nahi Shabder Rup*, Subarna Rekha, 1987, p. 96.

17. *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Katharmita*, p. 859.

18. *Sri Ramakrishna Bhaktamalika*, 2nd Part, p. 266.

19. *Sri Ramakrishna O Thar Shisyagan*, p. 216.

20. Quoted in *Sri Ramakrishna: Nahi Shabder Rup*,

Sri Ramakrishna's coming to theatre to watch the play was a mere pretense, his main purpose in coming was to deliver the fallen.²¹

Girish Chandra did put the question to Sri Ramakrishna: 'What is the utility of carrying on with the theatre any more?' Living in the present age as we are, it is not possible for us to comprehend to what extent the future of the Bengali Stage depended on the answer to that question. Sri Ramakrishna answered it from a unique standpoint of human welfare: 'No, no, let it continue. It will contribute to mass education.'²² Trusting Girish entirely, he gave him unrestricted freedom, and Girish, too, served the Bengali,

With perfect renunciation, he moved about in the world, which was to him merely a cremation ground. He was excited with supreme joy on the realization that Sri Ramakrishna, the saviour of the fallen, took human form only for his salvation.

Stage throughout his life with an unfettered mind. When in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, Girish's uncommon intellect worked in unison with his deep spiritual realization, and contributed to the natural manifestation of his creative art. The general public was charmed with the dramas, songs and plays he composed. Having seen the extraordinary performance of Girish in the play called 'Pandav-Gourab', the poet Nabin Chandra Sen said: 'We have become salves of Girish.'²³ *The Indian Mirror* wrote: 'His impersonation was, to apply the re-

marks of Victor Hugo on Lamaitre's Ruy Blass, "not a transformation, but a transfiguration".²⁴

British Government proscribed three of his dramas because they contained materials that inspired love for the Motherland and the spirit of struggle for independence, both of which were considered unlawful by the Government. Leaders of the national movement were inspired by the intellect of Girish. On the other hand, noticing his undisputed sway over the entire field of drama, 'Jyotindra Nath Thakur gave up composing drama'.²⁵ And after watching the play, 'Chaitanya Lila', Vijoy Krishna Goswami danced with joy.²⁶ There were no advertising media like radio or T.V. as of today, but the drama's wonderful attraction made even beggars sing those songs composed by Girish; they also helped a professional singer take lessons for his songs.²⁷ As a matter of fact, Girish Chandra's dramas and plays were completely interwoven with his personal life. He used to say: 'For a man who had never suffered from the pangs of misery in life, practising poetry is a mockery—specially composition of drama. A playwright has to realize the truth after putting himself under various circumstances. A real poet never writes anything unless he had felt it himself.'²⁸

To come back to the earlier topic, to the ultimate tragedy of Girish's life: Even after his contact with Sri Ramakrishna, the dreadful procession of deaths around Girish Chandra did not stop. In his mature age he had to oversee, helplessly, the passing away

(Continued on page 678)

p. 101.

21. 'Bhakta Girish Chandra', *Udbodhan*, B.S. 1319, vol. 15, p. 350.

22. *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathanrita*, p. 830.

23. Quoted in *Thakur Sri Ramakrishna O Swami Vivekananda*, p. 14.

24. *Ibid.* p. 15 (original in English).

25. *Ibid.* p. 26.

26. *Ibid.* p. 20.

27. *Sri Ramakrishna O Banga Ranga Mancha*, pp. 28-9.

28. Quoted in *Girish Chandra*, p. 411.

Man-making Education

SWAMI MUKTIDANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Different Philosophers and educators from Plato to John Dewey have proposed different aims and theories of education. The real significance, uniqueness and importance of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of man-making education can be properly evaluated only against the background of other educational theories: those held in ancient India, and also those put forward by eminent educationists in other parts of the world.

Education in Ancient India

It may not be an exaggeration to state that ancient India was one of the pioneers in the field of education. During the Vedic age, India evolved its own unique mode of education by which Vedic knowledge and culture was transmitted to successive generations. This is what is known as the *gurukula* system. In it the home of the guru served as the main link in the transmission of knowledge. Numerous are the references to the ideals and systems of Ancient Indian education in the Vedic as well as the classical Sanskrit literature. The Upanishads, the Brahamanas, the Smriti texts, the Epic poems, and celebrated commentators like Sayana, Yaska and Sankara deal with various aspects of education. They extol the great merit of learning, and are intent on correct conduct on the part of the teacher and on the part of the taught. A distinction is made between learning for livelihood or lower knowledge (*aparā vidyā*) and learning for perfection or supreme knowledge (*parā vidyā*).

Although spiritual wisdom was held in the highest esteem in India, secular learning was not ignored. In fact, the studies of nature, astronomy, medicine, social organizations, and human mind were pursued here with considerable enthusiasm. However, although education underwent a high degree of development and played a vital role in the efflorescence of Vedic culture in the Upanishadic period, it remained bound to the religious tradition of the land. Therefore, for independent thinking, we have to examine other cultures.

Education in Other Countries

Confucius (551-449 BC) of China, and Plato (427-341 BC) of Greece may be said to be the pioneers in the field of independent thinking on education, followed by Aristotle and others. In fact, ancient Greeks first made a beginning in framing educational philosophy on definite lines. Later on, during the post-Renaissance period, Comenius (1592-1671), an eminent European educational thinker dedicated his whole life almost entirely to the cause of education.

Like St. Augustine (354-430), the early Christian philosopher and educational thinker, Comenius held that human nature is corrupted by inherited sin but he also asserted that it is capable of absolute perfection. Educational thinking in the West till the 18th century was influenced by the Judeo-Christian view of man, which says that man is a born sinner and his soul is intrinsically evil. The first educationist to repudiate this view was the French philosopher Jean Jacques Roussau (1712-78). His revolutionary

concept of education as a technique of helping children grow and develop in the natural way profoundly influenced three great European educationists—Pestalozzi, Froebel and Herbert, and later on John Dewey in the USA.

It was J.F. Herbert who said that the aim of education should be the development of moral character. And he developed a technique of curriculum-based education in which the teacher tried to create in the student interest in different subjects. Herbert was followed by Froebel, who shifted the emphasis from curriculum to the child. The goal of education became not knowledge but self-realization, by which was meant the attainment of fulfilment through the development of human faculties. According to Froebel, knowledge cannot be put into the child; it can only grow with the child's activity. Froebel was the originator of kindergarten. His ideas were further developed by several others, until the great American philosopher and educationist John Dewey, came on the scene with his doctrine 'Education is life itself'. According to Dewey, education is the process of unfolding the nature and capacities of the child.

From this review of the development of education in the West it is clear that Western thinkers were successful in analysing the educative process and in making education an autonomous social activity. But the philosophical limitations of the Greco-Christian culture prevented them from envisaging the total development of man, that is, the development of all the three dimensions of human personality.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S VIEWS ON EDUCATION

It is in this context that we can really understand the significance and supremacy of Swamiji's ideas on education. Swamiji takes a big leap from here and bases his

educational philosophy on the higher spiritual dimension of man, which affirms that man is essentially divine and is hence the repository of perfection, infinite knowledge and power. An educational system must provide opportunities and create conditions for the gradual manifestation of this divinity, perfection, knowledge and power which are dormant in man. Swamiji's views on education are deeply rooted in the Vedantic doctrine of the Atman and its corollary, the trichotomous nature of personality.

Another point to remember specially is that Swamiji had the masses of India in mind when speaking on education. Most of the foreign methods of education to uplift the masses, however, are not suitable for Indian conditions. Here comes the importance of Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji was the first religious leader to declare openly that the greatest problem of India was the uplift of the masses (and not widow-re-marriage, idol worship, etc., as the other leaders had then held). And Swamiji developed a method of uplift that was in harmony with Indian culture. The practical aspect of this method is based chiefly on education. Even at that distant time Swamiji understood the enormous importance of education in the transformation of Indian society. He said: 'Education, education, education alone! Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own poor people, and I used to shed tears. What made the difference? Education was the answer I got.'⁵

He felt that there was no problem which could not be solved by this magic word, 'education'. However, by education

5. Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1963), vol. 4, p. 483.

Swamiji meant not mere book-learning but the total development of man, or 'man-making' as he put it.

Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to the Theory of Education

The key to Swamiji's doctrine of education lies in his famous definition of education. 'Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.'⁶ Here manifestation of perfection refers to the total development of the empirical human personality. Through this definition Swamiji identified education with life itself long before Dewey propounded a similar theory. Besides, Swamiji's theory goes far deeper than that of Froebel, Dewey and other modern educationists.

According to these latter thinkers, a child is not an inert thing, nor his mind a tabula rasa. A child has impulses, predispositions, a capacity to assimilate and grow, and in the process, these bring out its hidden abilities and talents. Swamiji's ideas are in agreement with this view. He gives the example of plant. What we can do is speeding up the growth of a plant by providing it with water and manure, but plant itself has to assimilate these and grow.

Swami Vivekananda said:

A child teaches itself. But you can help it to go forward in its own way. What you can do is not of the positive nature, but of the negative. You can take away the obstacles, but knowledge comes out of its own nature. Loosen the soil a little, so that it may come out easily. Put a hedge round it; so that it is not killed by anything, and there your work stops. You cannot do anything else. The rest is manifestation from *within* its own nature. So with the education of a child; a

child educates itself.'⁷

All knowledge, therefore, secular or spiritual, is in the human mind. In many cases it is not discovered, but remains covered, and when the covering is being slowly taken off, we say, 'we are learning' and the advance of knowledge is made by the advance of this process of uncovering. The man from whom this veil is being lifted is the more knowing man, the man upon whom it lies thick is ignorant, and the man from whom it has entirely gone is all-knowing, omniscient.⁸

The problem of education is closely linked with our concept of human nature. It is here that Swamiji differs from the modern educationists, who limit man to the psychophysical level. Swamiji dives deeper into the human personality. For him the real nature of man is pure Consciousness; mind and body forming only the coverings of this Self called Atman. It is perfection in itself; it is self-luminous. Just as light passing through tinted glass assumes various colours and forms, the light of Atman passing through the mind reveals thoughts and external objects. Thus, every act of knowing manifests this inner light. By extension this implies: The right type of education is that which trains us to know rightly. Therefore, that is the best education which gives us perfect knowledge, through which the inner light of the Atman is fully manifest.

Religion: The Core of Education

From the above discussion, we can justify the similarity between Swamiji's definition of education and religion: 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man'. For Swamiji, ordinary education is only a part of the individual's larger attempt at

6. Ibid. vol. 4, p. 358.

7. Ibid. vol. 4, p. 55.

8. Ibid. vol. 1, p. 28.

self-realization, which Swamiji means by the word 'religion'. While by the word 'self' the modern Western educationists mean only the empirical self or ego, Swamiji meant the transcendental Self or Atman. That is why Swamiji said: 'I look upon religion as the innermost core of education. Mind, I do not mean my own, or any one else's opinion about religion.'⁹

J.F. Herbert pointed out the need for arranging the curriculum around a 'core-subject', which according to him should be the history of mankind. The remaining subjects were to be taught with the core-subject providing the inter-connections. Swamiji's idea of education, however, was that the Indian curricula should have religion (spirituality) as the core-subject. This idea is not as impractical as it may appear to many people. Children could be taught that their real nature is pure, and that they are all parts of the universal life. They could be taught from an early age to see life as sacred, and every kind of good action—physical and mental—as an attempt to express this divinity of life; and every form of service, an act of worshipping God. Science, art and social studies must be taught as component parts of the Divine life. Children should be taught, above all, that the goal of life is self-realization and every form of discipline is a step towards its fulfilment. When children understand that science, art and social life have a higher purpose, life will appear to them as meaningful, and existence itself, a great privilege. This will arouse hope and self-confidence in them, and as they grow, they will be able to face the problems of life with courage and make life a blessing for them, and for others. This was the ideal Swamiji had in mind, when he said that religion is the core of education.

Closely connected with Swamiji's the-

ory of religion as the core-subject is his idea that the purpose of education is man-making and character-building.

Here again there is superficial resemblance of Swamiji's idea to Herbert's well-known dictum that, the goal of education is the formation of character. But while Herbert's concept of morality was based on obedience to social norms and the Biblical commandments, Swamiji based his concept of morality on the deeper principle of manifestation of man's potential divinity.

SWAMIJI'S VIEWS ON CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION

i. *Development of Moral Character*

We have discussed earlier Swamiji's theory of ethics in general and seen that moral perfection is an integral part of his theory of man-making. Now let us study the various aspects of moral character that Swamiji has explicitly included in his educational philosophy as an aid to education. Stressing the need for the development of moral character, Swamiji says:

We want that education by which character is formed...Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.¹⁰

This clearly shows that Swamiji gave paramount importance to moral character in his educational philosophy. He knew that, only that power which moral life gives can integrate the personality, make the mind a fit receptacle for the accumulation of knowl-

9. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 231.

10. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 302.

edge, and transform it into practical wisdom. The two important moral principles that Swamiji incorporated in his aid to education are (a) *brahmacharya*, and (b) *shraddhā*. These two are closely inter-related, according to Swamiji.

a. *Brahmacharya*: Conservation and sublimation of the psycho-physical energy, the creative potency of man, was the main secret and source of power by which the ancient seers of India unlocked the door to the treasure of wisdom hidden within them. Swamiji was fully aware of the need of *brahmacharya* for increasing human efficiency, especially for developing the higher intellectual or intuitive faculty. Hence in his plan of education he gave it an important place. He said: 'Complete continence gives great intellectual and spiritual power'.¹¹

...simply by the observation of strict *brahmacharya* all learning can be mastered in a very short time—one has an unfailing memory of what one hears or knows but once. It is owing to this want of continence that everything is on the brink of ruin in our country.¹²

The chaste brain has tremendous energy and gigantic will-power....Continence gives wonderful control over mankind. The spiritual leaders of men have been very continent and this is what gave them power.¹³

Everybody should be trained to practice absolute *brahmacharya*, and then, and then only—faith—*Shraddhā* will come.¹⁴

b. *Shraddhā*: Swamiji considered *Shraddha* or faith in oneself as an important virtue to be inculcated in the pupil. Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavadgita*: '...He who

has *shraddha* gets knowledge.' *Shraddha* implies faith in oneself, faith in higher values, faith in God and faith in the words of the preceptor. Without *shraddha* no progress can be made in any walk of life. Swamiji gave it an important place in his educational philosophy, as a cardinal virtue to be cultivated by the student. He said: 'The ideal of true *shraddha* must be brought back once more to us, the faith in our own selves must be re-awakened, and, then only, all the problems which face our country will gradually be solved by ourselves.'¹⁵

To preach the doctrine of *Shraddha* or genuine faith is the mission of my life. Let me repeat to you that this faith is one of the potent factors of humanity....First have faith in yourselves. Know that though one may be a little bubble and another may be a mountain-high wave, yet behind both the bubble and the wave there is the infinite ocean.¹⁶

Therefore, my brethren, teach this life-saving, great, ennobling, grand doctrine to your children, even from their very birth.¹⁷

ii. *Concentration and Detachment*

Swamiji knew the science of concentration perfectly well. He was a man of complete self-control and a past-master in meditation. He could therefore not only attain spiritual illumination but also master the different branches of human knowledge and art—especially music, science, philosophy and history.

The ancient sages of India had developed this science of concentration. Swamiji added his own contribution to it and made it the very pivot of educational methods. It is an indispensable aspect of both learning

11. Ibid. vol. 7, p. 67.

12. Ibid. vol. 7, p. 224.

13. Ibid. vol. 1, p. 263.

14. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 369.

15. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 332.

16. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 444.

17. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 376.

and teaching process. Hence Swamiji laid great emphasis on developing the power of concentration in his plan of education. He said:

To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collection of facts. If I had to do my education over again, and had any voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will. Side by side, in the child, should be developed the power of concentration and detachment.¹⁸

In making money, or in worshipping God, or in doing anything, the stronger the power of concentration, the better will that thing be done. This is the one call, the one knock, which opens the gates of nature, and lets out the flood of light. This, the power of concentration, is the only key to the treasure-house of knowledge.¹⁹

iii. *Guru-kula-vāsa*

The best institution for educating the youth according to Swamiji is the guru-kula. When a disciple once put Swamiji the question, 'Well, Maharaj, what is your idea of educating our boys?' out came the answer, 'Guru-griha-vāsa', living with the guru.²⁰ Giving the description of the ancient gurukula Swamiji says,

The old system of education in India, still prevalent in many parts of the country, especially in connection with sannyasins, is very different from the modern system. The students had not to pay. It was thought that knowledge is so sacred that no man ought to sell it.

Knowledge must be given freely and without any price.²¹

The teachers used to provide students with food and clothes. The essence of the system was that the students received education by constantly living with the teacher rather than through formal instruction. There are many Upanishadic stories giving vivid picture of the life in the ancient gurukula. The student drew inspiration from communion with nature, learnt valuable lessons by tending the sacred fires and by doing various kinds of useful work, for maintaining the gurukula. Thus living with the teacher and opening his whole personality to the transforming influence of the teacher was the most important factor in the ancient system of education.

Swamiji wanted to adopt this system of education by making necessary changes to suit the modern situation. But he wanted that the spirit of the gurukula should be revived. He told his disciple once, 'We must found brahmacharya homes as in times of old. But now we must lay their foundation on broad basis, that is to say, we must introduce a good deal of change into it to suit the requirements of the time.'²²

Another significant point mentioned by Swamiji in this context is his emphasis on the need for finding the support of inner reference from our own self for all the knowledge that we receive from the world outside. Then only knowledge will ripen into wisdom. He says:

Go into your own room and get the Upanishads out of your own Self. You are the greatest book that ever was or ever will be, the infinite repository of all that is. Until the inner teacher opens, all

18. Ibid. vol. 6, pp. 38-9.

19. Ibid. vol. 2, p. 391.

20. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 364.

21. Ibid. vol. 4, pp. 162-3.

22. Ibid. vol. 7, pp. 158-9.

outside teaching is in vain....Books are useless to us until our own book opens; then all other books are good so far as they confirm our book.²³

He wanted that knowledge should always be supported by life-experience. Then only it will have power. According to Swamiji, what matters in education, especially if one has to play the role of teacher, is not intellectual ability but the personality of man, which Swamiji called personal magnetism. Swamiji said:

...Words alone cannot always produce an impression. Words, even thoughts contribute only one-third of the influence in making an impression, the man, two-thirds. What you call the personal magnetism of the man—that is what goes out and impresses you.... Coming to great leaders of mankind, we always find that it was the personality of the man that counted....It is the real man, the personality of the man, that runs through us. Our actions are but effects....²⁴

If we examine the above-mentioned ideas of Swamiji, we get the clue to his concept of man-making education and the hint about the method of man-making which we have interpreted and explained through three processes—self-actualization, self-realization and moral perfection.

PRACTICAL MEANS OF SPREADING EDUCATION

Swamiji did not stop by merely giving new theories about education. He was very keen to put his ideas into practice and to see how it worked. He drew many plans and devised practical means for spreading education to the masses. He exhorted his

brother-disciples and other devotees to work for this cause and gave them a detailed scheme for spreading education. He said:

I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses. The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, i.e., by spreading education among the masses.²⁵

How are the masses to be educated? Is it possible to open enough schools to accommodate them? Swamiji says: 'If the mountain does not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain.'²⁶ The wandering sannyasins, according to Swamiji, should consider it their sacred duty to educate the masses. 'Wandering from place to place will be necessary till "people come to education".'²⁷

Explaining how this is to be done, Swamiji says,

There are thousands of single-minded sannyasins in our country going from village to village, teaching religion. If some of them can be organized as teachers of secular things also, they will go from place to place, from door to door, not only preaching but teaching also. Suppose two of these men go to a village in the evening with a camera, a globe, some maps etc. They can teach a great deal of astronomy and geography to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations they can give the poor a hun-

23. Ibid. vol. 7, pp. 71,89.

24. Ibid. vol. 2, pp. 13-15.

25. Ibid. vol. 4, p. 482.

26. Ibid. vol. 8, p. 308.

27. Ibid. vol. 8, p. 425.

dred times more information through the ear than they can get in a lifetime through books.²⁸

How should the teachers of the masses carry out their task? Their duty is to befriend the people. Tell them and make them understand,

'You are our brothers—a part and parcel of our bodies and we love you and never hate you.' If they receive this sympathy from you, their enthusiasm for work will be increased a hundredfold. Kindle their knowledge with the help of modern science. Teach them history, geography, science, literature and along with these the profound truths of religion.²⁹

Also instruct them, in simple words, about the necessities of life, and in trade, commerce, agriculture, etc.³⁰

My idea is to bring to the doors of the meanest, the poorest, the noble ideas that the human race has developed both in and out of India, and let them think for themselves.³¹

Along with knowledge, Swamiji insisted on giving culture to the masses. He said:

It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. You can put a mass of knowledge into the world, but that will not do it much good.... Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas, they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in

the raised condition of the masses.³²

Finally, Swamiji knew very well that his ideas and ideals of education could not be put into practice unless the whole educational machinery of the nation was controlled and guided by national values. That is why he said:

...we must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our own hands, and it must be on national lines, through national methods as far as practical. Of course this is a very big scheme, a very big plan. I do not know whether it will ever work out. But we must begin the work.³³

In this context we may recall one significant observation made by Swamiji about the limited range of human knowledge as compared to the vastness of the unknown mysterious universe. He says:

This universe of ours, the universe of senses, the rational, the intellectual, is bound on both sides by the illimitable, the unknowable, the ever unknown.... Essentially, however, religion belongs to the supersensuous and not to the sense plane....³⁴

This means an individual is bound by the unknown on both sides—superconscious above, and unconscious below. It can be seen that the methods to scale the farthest reaches of superconscious experience, and to bring out the potential faculties buried in the unknown depths of the unconscious, both are incorporated in the Swamiji's philosophy of man-making. This can also be interpreted further as the expansion of individual self (microcosm) into the cosmic self

28. Ibid. vol. 4, p. 363.

29. Ibid. vol. 7, p. 149.

30. Ibid. vol. 5, p. 381.

31. Ibid. vol. 5, pp. 28–9.

32. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 291.

33. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 302.

34. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 1.

(macrocosm) on the one hand and realization of the divine core of individual self on the other. This corroborates Swamiji's famous statement: 'Expansion is life....' We can, therefore, say that education, when identified with life, is expansion of individual life and consciousness.

CONCLUSION

We may bring our discussion to a conclusion by examining what exactly Swami Vivekananda has done through his new philosophy of man-making.

In the first place, he conceived of education as the harmonious blending of the essentials of the Eastern spiritual ideal with those of the Western empirical ideal. This education not merely enables man to make his life on this earth more comfortable and pleasurable but also frees him from ignorance and fear of death. The realization of the Atman, the immortal essence in man, alone can make him free and fearless. Thereby Swamiji has also harmonized the essential theme of the two age-old incompatible ideals of man, *abhyudaya* (prosperity) and *nihsreyasa* (spiritual perfection) by making Atman the basis of both self-actualization and self-realization in his new Gospel of man-making. Swamiji, therefore, said,

...power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come when the sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity.³⁵

It is obvious that by man-making education Swamiji meant such an educative process that will rouse the soul to self-conscious activity and harness the power of the awakened self for both empirical and spiri-

tual attainments. There is nothing higher in the universe than this divine principle of man. It is the source of all power and glory. Unfolding this power hidden in the Atman is the central theme of Swamiji's philosophy of education and also his unique contribution. The ideal of man-making, therefore, means making of a divine man out of the animal man, with a high degree of self-actualization. Swami Vivekananda himself is a shining example of such an ideal, and this unique educational philosophy that he propounded is based on his life-experience and realization.

Another point worth noting is that though Swamiji made religion the core, and the Atman doctrine the pivot of his educational system, he took great care to see that for the sake of self-realization life is not tilted too much towards extreme asceticism, divorced from the normal society, as happened in ancient India. He knew that this cannot be an ideal for the common man. Hence he advocated the middle path and incorporated the brighter aspects of modern secular education in his educational philosophy meant for uplifting the masses. He showed that the Western values of education derived from reason and science are not contradictory to the Indian spiritual values; rather, they are much needed to make our educational system more effective so that it can really become a powerful instrument for the eradication of poverty, transformation of society, and for the total development of man.

So, we see that the concept of education, which initially began as acquisition of certain skills for livelihood during early period of history, evolved and ultimately culminated in the idea of education as expansion of life and consciousness in Swamiji's philosophy of man-making education. □

35. Ibid. vol. 3, p. 193.

Beyond the Waterfall

ROBERT P. UTTER

This poem was read at the Vedanta Retreat at Olema, California on 4 July 1995. The author is a retired teacher of English and Philosophy at City College of San Francisco, California. He has for long been a member of the Vedanta Society of Northern California and the Vedanta Society of Berkeley, and has contributed many articles to the PB.

1

Beyond the waterfall is the secret door
That opens into That which can never
be confined.

That which can never be confined
Ceaselessly pours in an irresistible
torrent into That which confines.

The waterfall pours forever, and
behind it is the door
Of all hope and all freedom and
all peace.

The waterfall pours its terrifying
thunder, and we tremble,
and flee in fear.

The deathless waterfall brings
the Eternal
Into time, splitting time
Into everything, and nothing.
The thunder speaks love, and death,
and eternity.

The sun stands on the mountain at the
edge of the day
And proclaims death,
And proclaims life,
And proclaims That which can never
be proclaimed.

The sun shines in silence and gives
vision to all.
The ever-shining sun gives day and
night to all.

The leaping dolphins play in the sea
and the sun.
They live in the sea, yet

they are not of the sea.

They breathe the breath of the sky,
and without it they drown and
sink to a watery doom.

They have the sunfire in their eyes,
they laugh, and then they weep
the tears of the sea-spray and plunge
Into the depths of the sea of sorrow.

But once again,
And again, and again they leap into
the upper ocean of the sun's fire.

They laugh, they leap—and yet
again they weep and plunge
into the dark caverns of sea pain.

They yearn, they regret, and yet
They ever dance upward into
the golden ecstasy of the sun's
cascade of fire.

The sun stands on the verge of the
cold sea
And all the sea is fire-red with the
outpour of the life-blood,
And all the waves are leaping in
the spilling of the crimson tide.
After a long night of chill darkness
the sunrise devours the mist-haunted
demons of blindness.

Without a word, without a sound,
the sun simply says, 'I am,' and
the blindness vanished.

Without giving, the sun gives vision.
Without creating, the sun sees all,
And all beings see through the
Eye of the world.

Out of the caverns of sea-darkness the

dolphins leap into the singing of
the sun.

Where the waterfall of the immortal
enters the world of the mortal,
where does the mortal end and
the immortal begin?

2

The sea of sorrow is fathomless
and dark.

Between the swinging of a sea
And the next sea
Is the tolling of a bell.

Between the setting of the sun
And the rising of the moon
Is the breaking of a leaf.

Between the breaking of a wave
And the next wave
Is the fathomless separation.

Between the melting of a dream
And the shimmer of the dawn
Is the water-cry of a flute.

Let the sky fill
The hollows of earth's bones.

This sea of sorrow is the battlefield of
a perpetual war,
War that thunders and roars its
ceaseless cannonades of rage,
terror, and anguish,
War that destroys, war that wounds,
war that mangles, war that kills,
War that leaves no peace, no survival,
no rest, no fulfilment,
War between implacable truth and
unyielding falsehood,
Falsehood that ever reappears in
endlessly new smoke-shifting forms,
Truth that is formless and yet appears
in all forms and no forms.
This war thunders on without

pause or respite.

Everyone is equally engaged in it,
everyone is equally caught up in it,
everyone is mortally wounded and
doomed by it.

No, none survives it,
yet no one is killed by it.
Everyone is enslaved by it, and
everyone must pay the full price to it.

In this war it is the duty and destiny of
everyone to give his all to it,
Yet no one can win it, all must be
conquered by it.

Who then conquers? Who wins this
implacable war?

There are no winners and no losers.

All lose equally, all win equally.

This war is all agony and ecstasy.

This war is beyond all
agony and ecstasy.

What does this war mean? It means
nothing. It means everything.

It is all we can ever know of desire and
folly, of wisdom and sacrifice.

There is no way we can comprehend it.
Yet we can fathom it in the falling of
a flower.

This war we must study to the full,
for it is our own life-blood
we must shed.

Yet we must fight in it as if
we were not fighting, and
we must die in it as if
we were not dying,

For to win is to lose, and
to lose is to win; victory is defeat,
and defeat is victory.

This war devours all our thoughts, acts,
joys and sorrows, hopes and fears
as a whale swallows a man,
as the sea swallows a whale.

The thunder speaks. Irresistibly the
thunder speaks.

The thunder speaks to all, for none can
escape the bursting of its voice.

Do not ask what it says. The soul

knows what it says.
 It says what no one else can say.
 It says what no one else dares to say.
 It says, 'I AM! I AM! I AM!'
 Who else can say 'I AM!'? When the
 thunder says 'I AM!'
 all who hear tremble.
 Does it speak life? Does it speak death?
 Does it speak from beyond
 life and death?
 Do you mean to tell me
 That when the thunder speaks
 from nowhere and everywhere,
 When the whole sky is shattered and
 the thunder roars from the broken
 cloud towers,
 Are you then going to tell me,
 When all space and time are crumbling
 about you,
 That this is not the veritable immensity
 Of the voice of God?
 'Die!' cries the swallow swirling
 through the sleet.
 'Live!' cries the wild swan
 drinking the sky.
 And the thunder ricochets through
 the crackling towers of the storm.

3

Among the world's ancient tales
 There is the ever-intriguing
 story of King Bharata,
 He whose name is bestowed on the
 whole country of India.
 Bharata, the King of a vast kingdom,
 in the ripeness of his years
 Renounced his family, his kingdom,
 his wealth, and his power,
 And retired into the forest to seek God.
 But God knew that Bharata,
 no longer king, no longer husband,
 no longer father,
 no longer householder,
 Had brought his own jungle with him
 into the jungle
 Of trees and vines and streams and
 deer and lions.

And there he lived in solitude with his
 secret jungle entombed
 within his heart,
 Unknown to himself, hidden like
 a sleeping serpent.
 This sleeping serpent
 Was all of his ancient memories—
 his just-past life, and many more
 distant lives
 Deep-sunk by centuries long
 before.
 Bharata knocked on God's door,
 but received no answer. At last,
 however, God answered, but not
 in the way that Bharata expected.

One fateful day a pregnant doe
 came down to the stream to drink,
 But in that pregnant instant a lion
 roared in the forest nearby, and
 all was changed in the wink of an eye.
 The doe leaped in terror, and in leaping
 gave birth, and died,
 Leaving Bharata with the helpless
 newborn fawn. In a flood of pity
 Bharata pulled the fawn
 from the stream,
 and tenderly cared for it,
 Giving it all his thought, his strength,
 his love.
 As the fawn grew stronger, so stronger
 grew its grip on Bharata's heart,
 Until at last it became like
 another son to him,
 To him who had renounced his wife,
 his sons, his kingdom.
 Thus all secretly the war raged on
 within his heart,
 God and renunciation quite forgot.
 And so he lived his closing days
 Alone in the forest with his
 new-given son,
 Thinking of no one else, caring for
 no one else. And when death
 came to him
 He was thinking of nothing else but
 his beloved deer.

Now according to the law of karma
 and reincarnation
 One's dying thoughts determine the
 following birth.
 And thus it fell that Bharata returned
 to rebirth in the body of a deer.
 Thus did God catch Bharata in the net
 of his own desires,
 And gave him the long-sought answer
 to his prayers: a yoga path
 to realize God.
 For the first time in all his life he was
 truly alone.
 For the first time in all his lives he was
 placed in the iron grip
 Of an inescapable yoga path of
 total self-control.
 Was his death as Bharata a true death
 to him?
 It was the death of all he had hitherto
 valued, and yet—
 He now saw, locked for now in the
 helpless deer body,
 That there was nothing in his former
 human life
 Any better or any worse than his
 present life as a mute deer.
 The renunciation he had before so
 vainly sought was now
 forced upon him,
 And it bestowed on him a clear vision
 he had never had before.
 Owning nothing, limited by nothing,
 he now saw beyond the gates of
 life and death,
 Saw into the very womb of time itself,
 And forgot to desire even a clump of
 grass.
 Was he a man? He was chained in the
 deer body.
 Was he a deer? He had full memory of
 having been many times a man.
 He was then a nothing, a disembodied
 ghost,
 A castaway marooned on a desert isle.
 Was he afraid? Of what? What lion
 could shake him now

When death-by-lion would be
 a terrible mercy
 After the frozen affliction of this
 deer-bound death-in-life?
 Alas, no death-by-lion came his way.
 The tedium of his days
 Was like the dark drumbeats of his
 lone heart
 In measuring slow his creeping prison
 sentence. This deer-life fate
 Was in itself far worse than any death,
 and though
 No walls or fences bound him, he was
 as bound in by this deerskin hovel
 As any lunatic locked in a madhouse
 cell,
 Of corpse sealed under slabs of marble.

 And so, in brief, at last he died,
 Yet not in the deerskin body,
 but Bharata,
 The old familiar mask, the persona, he
 who had been king, husband, father,
 He who had renounced and gone into
 the forest, he who had not found God,
 That one died, while yet the deer
 lived on,
 There, there at last,
 In the savage jungle of all of his
 old desires
 Died the old Bharata forever, and
 the supreme Sage arose
 As out of the devouring
 funeral flames of death.
 For in his next life he was reborn as
 a supreme Sage
 Who lived only to lead others to God.
 When was the supreme Sage born?
 He was born in the deer body.
 Thus was the deer body Bharata's
 supreme yoga path to God.
 It was the chrysalis out of which the
 winged splendour of the Sage arose,
 The funeral-pyre from which the
 phoenix of immortal vision
 emerged and flew
 Into the sun.

4

Bharata is every one of us.
 In the secret cave of the heart
 Sits the illumined Sage in
 eternal meditation.
 God is equally in all, in everyone,
 in everything.
 When we speak to Him, He hears,
 He answers, He acts.
 Even if we see or hear no answer, yet
 He sees, He hears, He acts,
 If not today, then tomorrow;
 if not tomorrow, then next year,
 next century, next lifetime, or
 many lifetimes hence.
 For He alone knows when and how
 we are ready to receive His answer.

What else must we do
 save to remember
 Him Who is with us in all things
 remembered or not remembered?
 What else have we to do except
 to enjoy Him?
 For He is the only Self we ever have.

To fulfil our desireless hope we all
 must be
 Agelessly one with all...
 To be one with all things living or dead
 or neither
 We must slip from one sacrificial life
 to another
 As sweet and soft as the river rolls
 to the sea. □

Girish Chandra Ghosh: A Struggling Personality

(Continued from page 664)

of his second wife and his son, who was dearer to him than his life. But none of them could keep him overwhelmed for a long period. With perfect renunciation, he moved about in the world, which was to him merely a cremation ground. He was excited with supreme joy on the realization that Sri Ramakrishna, the saviour of the fallen, had taken human form only for his salvation.

With a charmed mind Girish thought—
 “The evil deeds I did in early life had been
 for the fulfilment of Sri Ramakrishna’s play;
 I also am a playmate of God incarnate; O
 God! I am thus eternally related to you! That

is why I am not miserable, even if I am
 known as the perpetrator of unlimited evil
 deeds! O Ocean of Compassion, bring me,
 your eternal servant, to this world in any
 form and as many times as you like; only let
 me not be deprived of the realization that I
 have been granted eternal shelter at your
 feet.”²⁹

The fulfilment of the life-long struggle
 of Girish Chandra lies here, in his return to
 his own abode. □

29. Quoted in ‘Bhakta Girish Chandra’, *Udbodhan*, B.S. 1319, vol 15, p. 282.

The essential thing is renunciation—without renunciation none can pour out his whole heart in working for others. The man of renunciation sees all with an equal eye and devotes himself to the service of all.

—Swami Vivekananda

Sister Nivedita and the *Swadeshi* Movement of Bengal

DR. ANIL BARAN RAY

Sister Nivedita's observations on the Swadeshi movement that broke out with Lord Curzon's announcement of the partition of Bengal reveal her complete identification with the aspirations of the people of India. They also reveal her deep understanding of the political currents sweeping across the country. Dr. Anil Baran Ray deals in this article with an important period in the political history of India, bringing out the sensitivity and perspicacity with which Sister Nivedita viewed the events unfolding then.

Dr. Anil Baran Ray is Professor of Political Science, Burdwan University, West Bengal.

Today, being the 30th Aswin, 16th October 1905, Partition of Bengali people is to be made by law.

This day then, designed to be the date of our division, is henceforth yearly to be set aside by us, for the deeper realization of our national unity. Having been made by this threat of division, overwhelmingly conscious of the essential oneness of the whole Indian Nation the heart of Bengal goes out to all parts of our common Motherland.¹

This observation of Sister Nivedita,² made on 16 October 1905, the day the Partition of Bengal was made effective in law,

reflects in a pithy form the feelings of Nivedita over the Partition of Bengal. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, decreed the Partition on the plea that Bengal was too unwieldy a province to be administered efficiently, and that a new province of East Bengal and Assam would have to be carved out of the old for the sake of administrative convenience. Curzon's real reason for carrying out the Partition was not 'administrative' but political³ dividing the Bengali people along religious lines and reducing the

1. *Letters of Sister Nivedita*, Ed. Sankari Prasad Basu (Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1982), vol. 2, p. 1274; hereafter *Letters*.

2. Sister Nivedita (born Margaret Elizabeth Noble in Ireland, in 1867, and initiated as Sister Nivedita in March 1898) who came to India at the instance of her Master, Swami Vivekananda, in January 1898 to work basically for the education of women in India, extended her educational work, especially since her Master's death in July 1902, to the whole nation, seeking to awaken it to the necessity of a struggle against foreign domination.

3. Curzon himself acknowledged in his telegram to the Secretary of State that the partition plan was political. Alternative plans to relieve the Bengal administration by setting up an executive council or by detaching linguistically Bihar and Orissa (the ultimate 1911 solution) were repeatedly dismissed by him on political grounds. The latter proposal, he argued in a telegram to the Secretary of State who was sympathetic with the idea, 'would tend to consolidate the Bengali element by detaching it from outside factors, and would produce the very effect that we desire to avoid. The best guarantee of the political advantage of our proposal is its dislike by the Congress Party.' See Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India* (Madras: Macmillan Co., 1983), p. 107.

importance of Calcutta by propping up Dacca as an alternative centre of influence. Realizing this, Nivedita concurred with the nationalist leaders of Bengal that the British administration must be resisted by wielding the weapons of boycott (of British goods) and *Swadeshi*⁴ (use of indigenous or Indian-made goods). Taken together, these two weapons against the British Raj constituted what came to be known in the annals of history as the *Swadeshi* Movement of Bengal. This article shows how Nivedita wielded her pen in favour of boycott and *Swadeshi*, why, despite all the fervour and heat that the *Swadeshi* Movement generated, it fizzled out after a time, and why *yet* the Movement could not be called a total failure in the long-term perspective of history.

I

Nivedita thought highly of the *Swadeshi* movement because it gave people a sense of unity and inspired them to make sacrifices. That she saw in boycott and *Swadeshi* a source of national power can be seen from the following observation of hers:

India appears to be waking up in these days. The incubus of Curzon is off....No one knows where it [the boycott] may all end. For the people are feeling their power. I think Curzon has broken the British Empire.⁵

In an extraordinarily powerful letter

written on 20 September 1905 to her friend G.K. Gokhale⁶, an Indian member of the Viceroy's Council, Nivedita opined that 'the will of the people should be supreme with regard to their own interests,'⁷ and that it is the will of the people which Curzon flouted in going through with his plan of partition. Expressing her satisfaction over how people were retaliating against Curzon, Nivedita wrote to Gokhale:

Have you heard how 300 clerks in one

5. *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 755, (letter dated 13 September 1905). It should be noted that, finally implemented in October 1905, the plan for the Partition of Bengal was announced in July 1905. The nationalistic agitation against the plan was practically from the time the announcement was made.

6. Nivedita's purpose in writing to Gokhale was to get him to issue a public denial of the rumour that he gave his pinion in favour of the Partition of Bengal. Nivedita wrote to Gokhale in the following terms: 'A rumour has been started here,—it is said by the authorities—that you gave your opinion in favour of the Partition. We of course know that this is not true—but it is being used to cause such a soreness, that a categorical denial published over your own signature would be an admirable step. Is it possible that any of the European members of the Council could have consulted you and that you could have said anything tentative, which would be liable to said misconstruction? Even if you did, it would still be open to you to write asserting that the will of the people should be supreme with their own interests in this matter.' *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 757.

We know from Nivedita's letter dated 1 November 1905, addressed to Gokhale, that Gokhale wrote back to tell her that the rumour that he gave his opinion in favour of the partition of Bengal was 'a calumny'. *Letters*, p. 759.

7. *Ibid.* p. 757.

4. Boycott was meant to hurt the British economic interests while *Swadeshi* was designed to promote the development of indigenous industries by increasing the demand for home production. It was hoped that by bringing people together in a fight against the British, these two *weapons* would forge a sense of unity among the people and thus defeat Curzon's purpose of driving a wedge in, as Nivedita puts it, 'the essential oneness of the whole Indian Nation'.

house of business here have struck work? (The Burn Co. incident.)

To us, who look on, the extraordinary thing is the spontaneous loyalty of the Indian people—utterly unpractised and inexperienced in these matters, as they are—to their brothers. They say that even in Madras this particular firm has advertised for clerks, and none will come for-

called them 'as they really are—often blood-thirsty—always money-thirsty—degraded by unjust wars and rapidly losing hold of the things that were of old the glory of the English name.'⁹

Nivedita saw in the *Swadeshi* movement the resurgence of 'Nationality by the whole Country,'¹⁰ and was pleased to note that the 'old' teachings on the subject, such

I always feel that by this particular power of unknown people to perform obscure acts of sacrifice under a dominating idea of the Community, you can exactly measure the national potentiality. It was by this power in the Russian people that Napoleon's march on Moscow was turned into a disaster. It was by the same power in the French that Napoleon's armies were raised. By this, America won freedom, and so on and so on.

ward. They stand or fall together—this is real unity.

The Boycott meanwhile is spreading even to women and priests—and the amount of sacrifice that has been made is extraordinary. I always feel that by this particular power of unknown people to perform obscure acts of sacrifice under a dominating idea of the Community, you can exactly measure the national potentiality. It was by this power in the Russian people that Napoleon's march on Moscow was turned into a disaster. It was by the same power in the French that Napoleon's armies were raised. By this, America won freedom, and so on and so on. And it was this power that a few months ago seemed unborn amongst us. Today it is seen on all sides. This is the element of hope—that outshines all others. Even petty shopkeepers are found to remonstrate with Indian customers who ask for a *videshi* [foreign] commodity!⁸

as those of her Master, had not fallen on deaf ears, and 'that they were all coming to the surface now.'¹¹ 'Manliness' exemplifying itself in strong, intelligent and united action of the people constituted the essence of the teachings of her Guru, and she was especially happy to see that 'the note of manliness, and self-help is sounded throughout the *Swadeshi* movement. There is here no begging for help, no crying for concessions.'¹² More than anything else, it is this note of the *Swadeshi* movement which, according to Nivedita, made the Indian people 'respected by the whole world'.¹³

Describing the *Swadeshi* as a vow and *tapasyā*¹⁴ representing a higher life of strug-

9. Ibid. p. 758.

10. Ibid. p. 795.

11. Ibid. p. 758.

12. *The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1982), vol. 4, p. 276.

13. Ibid.

14. A *tapasyā* it was indeed for Nivedita herself. Her support for the *Swadeshi* movement was not confined to the realm of thought only. She supported *Swadeshi* as much in practice as in principle. As Atmaprana, her biographer, points out: 'Abandoning the use of for-

8. Ibid. pp. 757–8.

Nivedita ended this letter with a condemnation of the English that deserves to be noted for its extraordinary outspokenness. She

gle and sacrifice (involved in buying an Indian-made article at a higher price in preference to a cheaper British-made one), Nivedita observes that:

There will yet come a time in India when the man who buys from a foreigner what his own countryman could by any means supply will be regarded as on a level with the killer of cows today. For, assuredly, the two offences are morally

making matches, ink, toothpowder, soap, note-paper, etc., she observes with satisfaction that *Swadeshi* actually contributed to the enhancement of the income of the toiling people. She quotes a Bengali Muslim to this effect:

'Brothers,' he was saying, 'a while ago, we could not earn four annas a day....But now, how everything is

...she could not resolve the contradiction involved in a movement which sought to enlist the Muslim masses and yet used Hindu symbols as a means of identifying nationalism. The British repression and the 'internal' contradiction of the movement inevitably led to the failure of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal.

identical....It is precisely in a matter like the keeping of the *Swadeshi* vow that the Indian people, especially, can find an opportunity to show their true mettle....

If we are told that no people will voluntarily buy in a dear market when they might buy in a cheap, we answer: *this may be true of Western peoples, educated in a system of cooperation for self-interest, and, at the same time, it may be untrue of the Indian nation, educated in a system of cooperation for self-sacrifice.* [Nivedita's emphasis].¹⁵

Nivedita recognized the *Swadeshi* as a source of wealth as well. Noting how small industries sprang up all over Calcutta and how the whole households were engaged in

changed! Ten annas a day, with comfort and decency. No more stealing, no more prison, and our women cook for us and for themselves!'¹⁶

With reference to the generation of 'national' wealth and the enhancement of the income of the ordinary folk, Nivedita observes:

Hope has come to the people. A chance of self-help has dawned upon them.¹⁷ ...If the *Swadeshi* movement, then, can only be adhered to with firmness, we may even begin to hear, from the politicians of the Congress, of an economics of hope, instead of an economics of despair!¹⁸

Nivedita was practical enough to recognize the difficulties of the *Swadeshi* movement—difficulties related to the fields of production and distribution. Production had to be brought up to the required level by strenuous efforts made in all directions, and small shops—the real distributing centres—had to be opened all over in order to

eign goods, she took to all available *Swadeshi* commodities.' *Sister Nivedita* (Calcutta: Sister Nivedita Girls' School, 1977), p. 190. 'She was also among the first to peddle, throughout Calcutta, the first woven stuffs, the first soaps, the first pencils,' points out Lizelle Reymond. See *The Dedicated* (Madras: Samata Books, 1985), p. 316.

15. *The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita*, vol. 4, p. 278.

16. *Ibid.* p. 279.

17. *Ibid.* p. 280.

18. *Ibid.* p. 282.

spread the *Swadeshi* movement 'into the remotest corners of villages and huts'.¹⁹

Observing that 'clear sight' and 'strong love of our own people' were the only requirements for overcoming the difficulties of the *Swadeshi* movement, Nivedita wrote:

The clear sight that shows us where to strike, and the strong love of our people, the helpless, 'the little children' of the Motherland that is to make every blow tell, these, and these only are the conditions that we want. Having these, we cannot fail. And we shall not fail. For all the forces of the future are with us. The *Swadeshi* movement has come to stay, and to grow, and to drive back for ever in modern India the tides of reaction and despair.²⁰

II

It is obvious that Nivedita entertained high hopes of the *Swadeshi* movement. She visualized a bright future for it when she wrote the above-mentioned piece and published it in *The Indian Review* in March 1906. Her hopes, however, were turned into despair four years later. The *Swadeshi* movement could not sustain itself. There was, of course, the inevitable British repression—arrests, prohibition of students' participation in the movement through the Carlyle circular,²¹ and the prohibition of the singing of the *Bande Mataram*.

British repression apart, the movement foundered on the rock of Hindu-Muslim

cleavages as well. Surendranath Banerjee, the leader of the anti-partition movement, acknowledged that *Swadeshi* had evoked the fervour of a religious movement, and that it became 'part of our Dharma'.²² He describes in his autobiography an incident in which he had the occasion to administer a *Swadeshi* vow to a Hindu audience before the god of their worship.²³ Nivedita herself acknowledges and glorifies this aspect of the *Swadeshi* movement when she writes the following:

The *Swadeshi* movement is the cow-protecting movement of the present age....I have spoken of this as a struggle on behalf of Dharma. But is this true? Is the *Swadeshi* movement actually an integral part of the National Righteousness? The Mother-Church, at least, has spoken with no uncertain voice. Like a trumpet-call has gone forth the Renewal of Vows at the Kalighat, in Calcutta. Throughout the whole country has been heard the fiat issued at Puri.²⁴

With leaders like the Nawab of Dacca²⁵

the withdrawal of grants, scholarships and affiliation from nationalist-dominated institutions as punishment for participation in the *Swadeshi* movement. The circular, however, spurred the movement towards the founding of national schools. The posting of Gurkhas in Barisal, the *lathi*-charge smashing up the provincial conference there in April 1906, and the numerous '*Swadeshi* cases' against picketers indicated the other measures of the British repression.

22. See R.C. Majumdar, *Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century* (Calcutta: K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960), p. 101.

23. *A Nation in Making* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1931), p. 212.

24. *The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita*, vol. 4, pp. 278–9.

25. Curzon was careful enough to rope in the

19. Ibid. p. 283.

20. Ibid. pp. 284–5. Nivedita's observations on the *Swadeshi* movement as quoted above were originally published in the March 1906 issue of *The Indian Review*, and were later reproduced in *The Complete Works of Sister Nivedita*.

21. The Carlyle circular, published on 22 October 1905, indicated the British crackdown on student picketers, threatening measures like

teaching otherwise, a considerable section of the Muslim community did not subscribe to something which appeared to them to be part of Hindu Dharma. Incidents such as those described by Surendranath and Nivedita and the use of Hindu symbols to characterize nationalism were taken advantage of by the communal-minded Muslim leaders as well as interested British decision-makers to spread disaffection among the Muslims.²⁶ As a result they, in general, remained aloof from the movement, and in some cases actively opposed it.²⁷

Despite the passionate assertion of Nivedita that the *Swadeshi* movement was a *national* movement, and that it was not pro-theocratic or pro-communal, that the movement included the Mohammedan as well as the Hindu, and that all stood to gain from the creation of a new future the movement aimed at,²⁸ she could not resolve the contradiction involved in a movement which sought to enlist the Muslim masses and yet used Hindu symbols as a means of identify-

ing nationalism. The British repression and the 'internal' contradiction of the movement inevitably led to the failure of the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal. And we hear a despairing Nivedita crying out in anguish:

Swadeshi has been shattered. And poverty grows worse and worse. I am downhearted—but oh things are dreadful!!!²⁹

In observing as she did in September 1910 that '*Swadeshi* has been shattered', Nivedita had the immediate circumstances and results of the *Swadeshi* movement in mind. That the *Swadeshi* movement was not a total failure or that it was not devoid of any impact on the British could be seen from the fact that the Partition of Bengal—the immediate cause of the Movement—was, after all, annulled in 1911. It will not be improper to say also that the Movement was reborn in the form of the Non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi in 1920. There might be disagreement over whether and how far the Non-cooperation movement was a modified or improved form of the *Swadeshi* movement, but it can be said with certainty that Gandhi, with his keen sense of history, could not have failed to learn and profit from the strengths and weaknesses of the earlier movement launched by the nation against the British Raj. How prophetic Nivedita was when she wrote, with reference to the British accomplishing the task of crushing *Swadeshi*, the following:

...I think the tide may ebb in its intensity, but it has left its mark higher on the shore and will return and cover it again. The passion for history is growing, and will not long be put off with the constant silly deprecation of one of the greatest nations of antiquity.³⁰ □

Nawab of Dacca (Salimullah Khan) 'by promising him a loan of Rs. 1,00,000 at normal interest, and the latter had little difficulty in assembling a huge gathering of Muslims to cheer the Viceroy's plan for a Moslem province'. See Amales Tripathi, *The Extremist Challenge* (Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1967), p. 97.

26. See Anil Baran Ray, 'Communal Attitudes to British Policy: The Case of the Partition of Bengal, 1905', *Social Scientist*, vol. 6, December 1977, pp. 34–46.

27. Hindu-Muslim communal riots incidental to the *Swadeshi* movement and the accompanying tensions and ambiguities of the age find a vivid portrayal in two of the finest novels of Rabindranath Tagore, namely, *Gora* (1907–09) and *Ghare-Baire* (1914).

28. See *Letters*, vol. 2, pp. 1132–3. Letter dated 18 August 1910. Nivedita considered the pro-Partition demonstration of Muslims as 'very ugly'. See *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 1031.

29. *Ibid.* p. 1147, Letter dated 14 September 1910.

30. *Ibid.* p. 1127.

To What Extent Buddhism Repudiated Vedic Religion? *

Y. KRISHAN

A masterly article from an eminent scholar, debunking the shallow criticism of many who sweepingly say that Buddhism is anti-Brahminical or heterodox. we are thankful to the author, of New Delhi, for permitting us to reprint this from the East and West.

It is a common, widespread belief among scholars¹ that Buddhism (as also Jainism) was a heterodox movement which challenged the Brahminical religious rituals, especially the performance of sacrifices enjoined in the *Vedas*. Buddhism is considered

to have repudiated the performance of sacrifices, *yajña*, as useless, nay wasteful for obtaining material prosperity and spiritual gains; the performance of animal sacrifices was strongly condemned. In fact for these reasons Buddhism (as also Jainism) are con-

* First published in *East and West*, 43, 1993. By permission of IsMEO, Rome, and the Author.

1. H. Oldenberg, *Buddha, His Life, His Doctrine, His Order* (1882), Delhi, 1971 (repr.), p. 172: 'Buddha discredited the sacrificial system: he censured with bitter irony the knowledge of Vedic scribes as sheer folly if not as shameless swindle.'

E.J. Thomas, *The History of Buddhist Thought*, London, 1971 (1st ed. 1933), pp. 11-13 observes: 'The non-Vedic schools definitely rejected the brahminical method of sacrifice and the Vedic lore.' Again, the Buddha's teaching 'had to justify itself against the sacrificial system of the current Hinduism.'

A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, 1980 (2nd ed.), pp. 155-6, 163, had observed: 'As to the religion of ritual and the sacrifice [...] it was categorically opposed by the Buddha as detrimental to the well-being of society.' The Buddha felt that the Brahmanas' 'sacrifices [...] are harmful as well as futile, [...] a travesty of the original sacrifice.'

P.L. Vaidya, 'Origin of Buddhism', in *2500 Years of Buddhism*, ed. P.V. Bapat, New Delhi 1956, p. 8 observes: 'The cult of sacrifice

which developed out of the prayers in the Vedic Samhitās had a powerful hold on the minds of the early Aryans in India. The elaborate rituals of the cult [...] are said to be responsible for doctrines which challenged the very existence of the cult.' (These doctrines include those of the Upaniṣads, Buddhism, and Jainism).

B. Walker, *Hindu World*, London, 1968, vol. I: 'There is nothing in the life of the Buddha to indicate that he set out to "reform" Hinduism, but some of the doctrines promulgated by him were contrary to many basic Hindu beliefs. Buddha was strongly opposed to religious ritual, to ceremonial worship and the sacrificial system [...].'

R.H. Robinson & W.L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction*, California, 1977, p. 13: 'During this century [6th BC] there arose a welter of non-sacerdotal religious teachings which pushed the Vedic orthodoxy from dominance in the middle Ganges area [...].' (Buddhism was one of these non-sacerdotal religions which was the most advanced and successful.) Ibid. p. 15: 'To their [the ascetics'] minds, the sacrificing priests were crass mercenaries who collected fees and earned no merit [...].' The most noteworthy and important of these ascetics

sidered as protest and reformist movements.

A careful examination of the canonical and of the non-canonical religious texts provides unambiguous evidence that the Buddha encouraged laymen to perform their traditional rites and rituals, especially *yajñas* (Pāli, *yaññas*)²; only animal sacrifices *paśu-ghātayañña*, *paśubali*, *paśubandha* of Vedic literature were condemned. Secondly, only those who joined the order, that is, became *bhikṣus*, were enjoined to eschew *yajñas* which did not involve animal sacrifice.

In the *Kūṭadanta Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, V. 21, the Buddha in reply to a question states that the performance of *yañña*, sacrifices with ghee, oil, butter, curd, honey, and sugar, leads to the rebirth of the performer (*yajamāna*) in heaven:

*Eva rūpam yaññam yajitvā vā
yājetvā vā kāyassa*

*Bhedā param maraṇā sugatim
saggam lokam uppajjitā.*

In the *Pāyāsi Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, D. ii, 354, the Buddha reiterates that sacrifice (*yañña*) produces great fruit (*mahāphalo*), great profit (*mahānisamso*), great renown (*mahājutiko*), and is of widespread effect (*ma-*

were the Buddhist *bhikṣus* and the Jaina *yatis*.

G.C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, Delhi, 1983, pp. 554–5, says: 'The Buddha's dialogues with the Brahmanas in the *Nikāyas* [...] appear to represent the beginning of the protracted Buddhist-Mimāṃsaka struggle' (The Mimāṃsakas were *Karmakāṇḍīs*, for whom the fire ritual plays the most important part). Again he observes: 'In the *Nikāyas*, the Buddhist opposition to caste and sacrifice has always been clear.'

According to L.P. Gomes, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade, London, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 351–2, 'The roots of Indian Buddhism are to be found in the "śrāmaṇic" movement of the sixth century B.C.E. [...] The *śramaṇas* set religious goals that stood outside and in direct opposition to the religious and social order of the *brāhmaṇas* [...]' The

hāvīpaharo) if there is no slaughter of cows, sheep, hens, pigs (*n'eva gāvo ajelakā kukkuṭo, sūkare haññanti*).

In the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha*, XVI, 1.5, the Buddha advises the *Vajjis* that, to ensure their continued prosperity and to obviate decline they should, *inter alia*, honour, esteem, revere their shrines and not let the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed, to fall into disuse: *Vajji cetiyāni [...] sakkaronti garumkaronti mānenti, pūjenti [...] dinnapubbam katapubbam dhammīkam balim no parihāpentī*.

The *Saṃyuttanikāya*, III. 1.9.6, clearly condemns the performance of animal sacrifices only. It distinguishes between Vedic rituals performed with and without animal sacrifices. It declares that *assamedha* (*aśvamedha*, 'horse sacrifice'), *purisamedha* (*puruṣamedha*, 'human sacrifices'), *vājapeya* (royal sacrifice involving drinking of soma, a kind of liquor) do not bring great fruit (*na te honti mahāpphalā*), and that good men do not attend sacrifices where goats, sheep and cows are slaughtered (*ajelakā gāvo ca vividhā yattha haññare*). The sacrifice in which animals are not slaughtered produces great fruit (*eso yañño mahāpphalo*).

The sacrificers (*yajamānas*) who perform sacrifices, which eschew animal sacrifices, are blessed (*seyyo hoti*) and not evil doers (*na pāpiyo*); nay, the Buddha extols

distinguishing feature of the Vedic ritual are vegetal and animal sacrifices.

2. It is significant that *Milindapañha* 225 defines *brāhmaṇa* as one who, *inter alia*, follows the ancient precepts and upholds the family customs: *pubbamānusatthi pavani-vaiṃsa dharaṇo*. Again Aśoka in Rock Edict IX exhorts the people to observe ceremonial rites (*maṅgalam*) in illness, in marriages, birth of children and on commencement of journeys. Even though he states that the manifold ceremonies are petty and useless (*nirarthakam*) and bear a little fruit, he emphasizes that they should nevertheless be observed (*tat kartvyaṃ caiva khalu maṅgalam*).

such sacrifices as great: *yañño vipulo hoti*; these please the gods (*pasidante devatā*).

The *Suttanipāta*, 308, speaks approvingly of the *yajña* performed in accordance with religious rites (*dammena*) and with clothes, ghee, oil, etc. The materials for sacrifice were collected by begging, but there was no slaughter of cows.

Again, *Suttanipāta*, 568, declares fire-worship as the best among the *yajñas* or sacrifices: *yañña agghutta mukhā*, 'agni-hotra (fire worship) is the best among the sacrifices.'

The *Jātakas* provide corroborative evidence. In the *Matakabhatta Jātaka* (no. 18), the *bodhisattva* strongly discounts the practice of sacrificing animals in the feasts for the dead (*mahtakabhattam*) for the sake of deceased kinsmen: these are commonly called the *śrāddha* rites for the manes. In *Āyācitabhadda Jātaka* (no. 19), the practice of sacrificing animals to the gods before the commencement of a journey on business and again after safe return therefrom with profit is deprecated. The tree-spirit advises the itinerant trader to give up the sacrifice of animals (*pānātipātakamma*) as it leads to bondage.

In the *Dummedha Jātaka* (no. 50), the *bodhisattva* Prince Brahmaḍḍa finds that the folks of Benares celebrated the festivals of gods by *balikammam*, involving slaughter of sheep, goats, poultry, swine and other living creatures. He considers this as wanton destruction of life due to superstition: *devatā maṅgalikā bahun pāṇavadham karonti*. To dissuade them from performing animal sacrifices, the Prince confined himself to offering of perfumes and flowers, of sprinkling the trees with water and doing *pradakṣiṇā* (circumambulation) of the trees. Eventually he succeeded in stopping the practice of animal sacrifices, which is described as *dussīlakamma*, an evil act.

In the *Mahāsupina Jātaka* (no. 77), the *bodhisattva* advises the king of Benares to avoid attending the sacrifices organized by the Brāhmaṇas in which animals are slaugh-

tered: *paśughāta yaññam nāma mā yaje*.

In *Lomasakassapa Jātaka* (no. 433), *paśughātayaññam*, sacrifice involving killing of animals, is described as futile in achieving one's objective. The *Lohakumbhi Jātaka* (no. 314), in its *nidānakathā* emphasizes the utter uselessness of *sabbacatukka yaññam*, the 'four-fold sacrifice of all creatures'—men, bulls, horses and elephants.

In short, attending sacrifices in which animals were not slaughtered was not banned.

It is only in regard to those who join the order of monks that the Buddha declares that sacrifices (which do not involve killing of animals) are of no value and should be eschewed.

In the *Vinayapīṭaka Mahāvagga*, I. 22.4, it is narrated that the Buddha asks Kassapa the reasons for abandoning fire-sacrifice (*agghuttam*, or *agni-hotra*). Kassapa explains that *yañña* promotes and provides material things and sensual delights. He considered them as dross (*etam malam*). So he had no interest in sacrifice or oblation (*na yiṭṭha na hute aranjin*).

In the *Kūṭadanta Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* already cited, the Buddha denounces the performance of a great sacrifice involving the slaughter of 700 each of bulls, steers, heifers, goats and rams, and directs that the animal proposed to be sacrificed be set free; he commends the cultivation of *sīlas* instead. It is noteworthy that the Buddha utters no word against the sacrifices performed with the offering of ghee, curd, sugar, cereals, etc. Likewise, the Buddha denounces in the *Samyuttanikāya* the *yaññas* (*assamedha*, *purisamedha*, *vājapeya*) involving killing of animals and human beings. He proclaims that sacrifices in which animals are not killed are rites which produce great results; they bring to the performer blessings and not curses or evil.

In the *Māgha Sutta* of *Suttanipāta*, 3.5, the Buddha advises that a Brāhmaṇa who gives *dāna* (charity) with a view to earn merit

(*punya*) should offer *havya*, fire oblation to noble persons who are enlightened, pure, self-controlled, free from attachment, etc.

Only in the *Bhūridatta Jātaka* (no. 543), fire-worship as such is denounced: it is incapable of fulfilling any desire. It disdainfully points out that cooks who light fires, blacksmiths who use fire in their trade, and those who burn corpses in the cremation ground do not gain any merit by their 'fire-performance'. But the whole tenor of the *Jātaka* is clearly anti-Brāhmaṇa rather than anti-sacrifice. It perhaps represents a time period when there was clash between Buddhist monks and Brahmanical priests—between *bhikṣus*, renunciators, and *mīmāṃsakas*, *karmakāṇḍī* householders. We cannot therefore justifiably take this *Jātaka* as evidence of denunciation of fire rituals which did not involve killing of animals.

The practice of *Anuttarayogatantra* in Tibetan Buddhism involves, *inter alia*, proper recitation of *mantras* and performance of ritual fire offering to the deities.

The ritual fire offering³ is for the purpose of pacification of illnesses, demons and hindrances; for the welfare of sentient beings, increasing the life span, etc.; and for power and wrath. The offerings consist of sticks, clarified butter, firewood free from insects, *kuśa* grass, seeds of mustard, sesame, rice, barley, pulses, wheat and *dūrvā* grass, milk and curd.

3. Sharpa Tulku and M. Parrot, *A Manual of Ritual Fire Offering*, Dharmasala 1987, Introduction, pp. xi–xiii.

The *homa* rite described by F.D. Lessings, *Yung-Ho-Kung—An Iconography of the Lamaist Cathedral in Peking*, Stockholm, 1942, vol. I, pp. 150–61, is similar. The purpose of the rite is (i) appeasing or propitiating various deities (*śāntika*), (ii) increasing prosperity (*pauṣṭika*), (iii) subduing demons (*vaśīkaraṇa*), and (iv) overpowering enemies (*abhicāra*). The materials used in the fire rite are also the same.

The Newari Buddhists of Nepal also perform, through a Vajrācārya *homa*, fire offering⁴ while celebrating all major rites of passage, the *saṃskāras*, of birth, marriage, etc. The rites involve the construction of the fire pit and offerings of grain and clarified butter to the chanting of *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs*.

The purpose of the Vedic sacrifices, *homa* and the materials used in the sacrifices (which did not involve slaughter of animals) are practically identical with those of the Buddhist ritual fire offering. It is quite reasonable to assume that the Buddhist *tāntrikas* had incorporated and adopted the practice of Vedic *yajñas* excluding those involving *paśu bali*.

It is noteworthy that it was the Upaniṣads which repudiated the utility of all Vedic *yajñas*, whether involving animal sacrifices or not. In this respect the Upaniṣads were more radical than the Buddha in repudiating Vedic sacrificial practices.⁵

Coomaraswamy had observed with great prescience, 'The more superficially one studies Buddhism, the more it seems to differ from the Brahmanism, in which it originated; the more profound our study, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish

4. S.M. Greenwood, 'The Role of Priest in Nepal Society', *Himalayan Anthropology*, ed. J.F. Fisher, The Hague, 1978, pp. 490, 493. See also T.T. Lewis, 'Mahāyāna Vratas in Newar Buddhism', *JIAS*, 12, 1, 1989, pp. 109–38.

5. *Muṇḍaka*, 1.ii.7, declares the sacrifices as inferior *karma*. *Muṇḍaka*, 1.ii.8, describes those who perform sacrifices as blind led by the blind. *Muṇḍaka*, 1.ii.10, declares that those who consider the performance of *iṣṭāpūrta* rites as the highest are deluded fools. *Chāndogya*, V.19.24, emphasizes the importance of the sacrifice of the inner self, *prāṇa-agnihotra*, as against the external sacrifices. *Kaṭha*, ii.22, states that the Self cannot be attained through much study and intellect.

Buddhism from Brahmanism or to say in what respects, if any, Buddhism is really unorthodox.⁶

6. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, Indian Ed., New Delhi, 1975, p. 45.

OPEN APPEAL

[To,
The Editor, *Prabuddha Bharata*,

...Enclosed please find one letter for publication in your esteemed journal. To generate 'mass-awareness' and, as a result, mass appeal to the authorities concerned, such ventilation in important journals is very necessary. For which I am looking to your cooperation.

I am,
Optimistically yours,
Dr. S.P. Chakravorty]

★

★

★

The Asst. Director General (Phil.-II)
Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts)
Government of India
Dak Bhavan, Sansad Marg, NEW DELHI 110 001

'Seva-Niketan', P.O. Kushberia,
P.S. Uluberia, Dt. Howrah,
West Bengal 711 316

Dear Sir,

Sub: Request/proposal for release of a *postal stamp on the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi*

I would like to bring to your kind notice the following:

The year 1997 will be celebrated throughout the world as the centenary year of the foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math, the religious and philanthropic organization founded by the great son of India, Swami Vivekananda, which needs no introduction in the present-day India.

Out of the three great personalities behind the origin and development of the Mission, viz. Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, your Department has already released stamps on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. But no stamps on the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, the divine consort of Sri Ramakrishna, have been released.

According to the history of the formation and growth of the Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math, it is accepted that Sri Sarada Devi played the role of the 'Archi-Mother'. She was the tremendous inspiration and driving force who impelled Swami Vivekananda, the chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, to establish the organization in the name of his Guru to disseminate his ideas for the uplift not only of India but also of humanity. The birth centenary of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, was celebrated long back in the year 1953. Now, to complete the series of postage stamps on the Holy Trio, another fitting opportunity is coming before us, the year 1997. For your information, we mention here that Swami Vivekananda held the first meeting to start this organization on 1st May 1897 in Calcutta, and thus that is considered the year of the inauguration of the Ramakrishna Order.

Now, as a citizen of India, I request you and your department to take this opportunity to commemorate the occasion by releasing postage stamps on the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, some time in the year 1997.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
Dr. S.P. Chakravorty

Practical Vedanta

THE COMPASSIONATE SALT-TAX

The emperor of Baghdad, Harun-Al-Rashid, imposed an indirect salt-tax on his subjects. He proclaimed that all the citizens must now on deposit twenty-five per cent of their income into the royal treasury.

Anxiety and terror spread all over the empire, but none dared to question the king's orders. However, on the second day after the fiat, a poor farmer, fearing hunger more than punishment, gathered courage enough to go to the emperor and humbly ask, 'Your Highness! Please excuse me for my impudence. I have come with a problem, but it will be solved if you tell me the purpose of this tax.'

'Definitely', assured the emperor glibly, feigning compassion. 'Listen. My subjects are like my children. I protect you as a father protects his children. I get worried when you are in trouble. Besides, I arrange food for you. In short, I always see to your needs and comforts.' Trying hard to sound more convincing and loving, he continued, 'My dear son, doesn't all that require money? This is why, much against my heart, I have been compelled to levy this small extra tax. I am sure you are now satisfied.'

The farmer, ripe with memories of several such acts of royal compassion, said, 'Your Highness! You are right. I sincerely believe that the tax levied by you is for our welfare. I have also learnt a lesson from it. I shall try that at home.'

'But how?' asked the emperor, his curiosity aroused. Now the wise farmer drew home his point and said, 'Kind sir, I have a dog at home. I always take care of it. When it is injured, I nurse it as though it were one of my children. When it is hungry, I give him food. Tomorrow morning, wagging its tail, it'll come to me for food. Then I'll say, "My son, I know you are hungry, but wait a while till I arrange for your food." Then I'll bring a knife, cut a piece of its tail and, keeping it in front of him, affectionately proclaim, "My son, I protect you as one of my children. I am always concerned about your welfare. That is why I have cut a piece of your tail and given it to you. Eat it and be happy."'

Stunned, the emperor felt ashamed and the very next day abolished the 'salt-tax'.

Reviews & Notices

REVIEW ARTICLE

REVOLUTION OF THE MYSTICS: ON THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF VĪRĀŚAIVISM; by Dr. J.P. Schouten; publ. Motilal Banarsidass, 41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi 110 007; First Indian Edition 1995; pp. 330+xiii; Rs. 250/-(Hard).

The book under review is the outcome of a good research study of Vīrāśaivism by a foreign scholar Mr. J.P. Schouten, trained in theology and sociology. The rise of the Vīrāśaiva (heroic followers of Śiva) movement, during the twelfth century resulted in the formulation of socio-spiritual principles of a unique type suitable for the uplift of the masses. Under the leadership of Basaveshvara, the movement attracted men and women from different backgrounds. Its sacred literature, called *Vacanas*, which consist of short poems in Kannada, reveals far-reaching spiritual values and social ideals. This spiritual movement combined an ardent devotion for Śiva and a critical response to social situations.

This long review is intended to cover in some detail the important aspects of a religious movement comparatively less known outside Karnataka. So, it follows the author's presentation regarding social structure and culture in relation to religious orientation and mystical experience of the Vīrāśaivas through their canonical *Vacanas*. The *Vacanas* were used as symbols of a new democratic expression of devotional experience. The leader of the movement, Shri Basaveshvara (Basava), assigned the leadership of the movement to Shri Allama Prabhudeva, an advanced mystic. Under Allama's guidance many devotees, both men and women, from all strata of society shared their spiritual experiences for mutual benefit.

Traditionally, Śaivism, the cult of Śiva, is very ancient. Therefore many elements of Śaivism are also found in Vīrāśaivism. The movement of Basava thus contributed to the revival of Śaivism. Basava tried out a new experiment concerning the practical application of Vīrāśaiva mysticism, extending its cardinal principles to influence everyday activities. For example, the custom of wearing the *iṣṭalinga*, the sacred symbol of Śiva,

strung on a necklace is a remarkable feature of the Vīrāśaiva culture. At the time of initiation a *linga* is given to each devotee by his Guru, who comprehensively instructs the disciples regarding the daily worship of the *linga* as a form of Śiva-puja. Mystically, the worship of the *linga* is the worship of one's own spiritual self, which essentially is one with Śiva.

Vīrāśaiva philosophical treatises focus on the monistic relationship, between *jīva* (soul) and Śiva (God). The manifest universe is treated as real and the validity of ethical, logical and aesthetic values are accepted. According to Vīrāśaivism, Śiva's creative energy (Śakti) has caused the existence of the manifold universe. Hence, Vīrāśaivism is also called Śakti-Viśiṣṭādvaita (monism qualified by Śakti). Since bondage is caused by ignorance, the goal of Vīrāśaivism is to remove that ignorance so that one may realize one's spiritual unity with God.

For the realization of the spiritual goal, Vīrāśaivism has prescribed the method of liberation in the *Ṣaṭsthala-Siddhānta* (the doctrine of the six phases). The first phase is *bhakta-sthala* (stage of devotee), in which the distinction between soul and God is experienced by means of devotional surrender and observation of ethical codes. In the second stage, *māheśvara-sthala* (the stage of the master), devotion is necessary but the emphasis is on endurance in order to resist all sorts of temptations. At this stage, self-control and self-mastery are cultivated. The next phase, *prasādi-sthala* (the phase of the receiver of grace), is the consequence of the spiritual activities in the first two phases. At this stage a devotee receives divine grace which is necessary for the realization of his spiritual goal. In the fourth phase, *prāṇa-liṅgiṣṭhala* (the phase of the *linga* in the life-breath), the devotee experiences the presence of the *linga* (reality) as a life-principle. In this transitional state, the devotee strongly feels his divine nature and experiences the perpetual presence of the cosmic divinity in his self; the distinction between the individual soul and the universal soul decreases. In the next phase, *śaraṇa-sthala* (the phase of the surrendered), the devotee unconditionally surrenders himself to the divine Being; consequently such a devotee becomes an accomplished devotee or saint. In the final phase of spiritual union, *Aikya-sthala*, the

devotee attains *consubstantial unity* with the divine Reality: the devotee experiences the ultimate liberation (*mukti*), the *summum bonum*.

Even though the ultimate spiritual goal is understood as *bayalu* (space) or *śūnya*, it is qualitatively different from the Buddhist notion of *śūnya*, because the Viraśaiva concept of *śūnya* has a positive significance which accommodates both the empirical and transcendental aspects of reality. Consequently, the doctrine of six phases provides an adequate model for the integral development of human personality.

Though path of devotion (*bhakti*) is dominant, knowledge and action are also considered necessary. To this effect the author rightly remarks: 'Knowledge and action are indissolubly connected. Every action must be reflected action, and true knowledge will always incite to action. Viraśaivism does not believe in theoretical knowledge which turns people away from the world. Knowledge finds its meaning only in its practical applicability. In the 20th century, Swami Vivekananda spread a similar message with his concept of 'practical Vedanta' which became very popular in India' (p. 154).

Since the *Vacana* literature unfolds the far-reaching social ideals of the devotees, it is necessary to consider critically the views expressed in the chapters titled (1) Caste, (2) Labour and Property, (3) Position of Women, and (4) Education.

The first chapter, on caste, deals with the traditional theory of caste system, and also with the reactions of the mystics to caste. Traditionally, caste system is the expression of the status of differences based on both purity and occupational hierarchy. It has exerted an enormous influence upon the Indian way of life. Consequently, such a social configuration resulted in a rigid caste-wise polarization. It was in this caste-ridden society that the Viraśaiva movement headed by Basava came into existence. Basava wrote many *Vacanas* declaring the equality of men and women in view of their spiritual essence. Revised classification of people into theists (devotees) and atheists was adopted. According to Basava, distinctions between people cannot exist for one who has acquired Self-knowledge, and all schools of religious thought provide knowledge that leads to freedom (*mukti*), i.e. the union of the human soul with God. Similarly, the foremost woman among the formulators of the *Vacanas*, Akka Mahādevi, who was chiefly interested in mystical experience, favourably considered all human beings as equal. This was a direct consequence of her spiritual experience. So the devotees authentically felt the effect of *liṅga*-worship on their relationship with other human beings, and in course of time moved for a drastic

change in the prevailing caste system etc. Ironically, however, mystics such as Chennabasava, the nephew of Basava, introduced a rule from the Āgamas to restrict 'conversion', that is, joining the new movement: People were admitted and initiated after a period of probation. (Thus a new 'caste' was being unwittingly created!) As in the colonial period, during the post-Independence period also, the Viraśaiva (*liṅgāyat*) community is generally considered to be one of the Hindu castes. However, many educated modern *liṅgāyats* (Viraśaivas) claim complete autonomy for the Viraśaiva system.

In the second chapter, the concepts of labour and property are analysed. Although Basava had attained a high degree of mystical experience, he remained active in professional life. According to the *Vacanas*, work must not be done for one's own profit but as a service to the divine Being, and there should be no hankering for the fruits of labour. The concept of *kāyaka* (work) conveys the religious significance of duties. By the performance of one's duty, a devotee comes to the abode of God (*kāyakave Kailāsa*). The *liṅgāyat* work-ethics consists of the doctrines of *kāyaka* and *dāsoha* (service), which is in harmony with the modern mood and need. Consequently, the revival of the values of the founders has a great significance.

Chapter 3 deals with the position of women during the Viraśaiva movement which gave rise to many female mystics. Many women joined their husbands in the religious movement. The famous woman-mystic, Akka Mahādevi spent some time in the midst of the devotees of Kalyāṇa. She sought to find her divine Lover in the holy mountain of Śrīsaṭa and attained to consubstantial union with the divine Being. She had thereby shown that women too could attain to the highest divine experience. Mukṭāyakka is another lady devotee who worked out a monistic method aiming at transcending duality. There were also many married women who played significant roles in the movement. In religious matters, Viraśaiva women are given equal status with men as they also worship the *iṣṭa-liṅga* (personal *liṅga*), in conformity with the maxim, *Liṅgadharaḥ sadā śuddho* (the *liṅga*-wearer is always pure). Generally the situation of *Liṅgāyat* women remains as before in post-Independence period; especially in religious matters, they continue to enjoy a certain freedom which is not obtained in orthodox circles.

The fourth chapter deals with education. The Viraśaiva movement laid great stress on the education of the masses through the *Vacana* literature. 'Most of the *Vacanas* are characterized by allegorical language and important mystical insights.' Normally the *Vacanas* are used to instruct

people in moral and spiritual affairs. Carrying this forward to suit the times, at present many monastic institutions are playing a vital role in the process of development and modernization in the Viraśaiva community. Further, many modern Viraśaiva thinkers, with adequate background of western philosophy, have been able to introduce Viraśaivism as a living tradition.

In conclusion, the author of the book honestly thinks that the sect is one of the most interesting in all India and that the fascinating period of Viraśaivism is the initial phase in which Basava preached a practical form of spirituality characterized by personal devotion (bhakti) of God Śiva. Both men and women wore the *iṣṭa-līṅga* or *Śiva-līṅga*, and this levelling function of the *līṅga* brought about significant changes in inter-personal relationships. *Anubhava-maṇṭapa*, i.e., the Hall of Spiritual Experience, encouraged the process of spiritualization within the community. Even though most of the devotees did not follow the path of renunciation, Viraśaivism offered such a way of life that spirituality could be experienced even by lay persons. The new ethical codes of the *Vacanas* encouraged a responsible

behaviour in the community. In Basava's experimental community, moral instruction plays a dominant role. On the basis of the author's view, the Līṅgāyat community is at present in a continuous process of adaptation and evaluation of its own tradition in the light of its concepts of work-ethics and service used in the twelfth century. The combination of spirituality and social awareness constitutes the major strength of the Viraśaiva tradition.

However, the book has certain limitations: The author being a non-Indian scholar, an adequate analysis of fundamental philosophical concepts in Viraśaiva system is lacking. Even in the case of his method of sociological research, there is no articulation of the current intellectual trends concerning religious dialogues with other traditions. Yet the book is useful for students, scholars, researchers and common people who are interested in understanding contemporary Indian thought. The book is enriched by its extensive bibliography and index. We suggest bringing out a paperback edition also.

Dr. R.I. Ingalalli
Dharwad, Karnataka

BHARTṚHARI: PHILOSOPHER AND GRAMMARIAN; *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Bhartṛhari*; ed. Saroja Bhate and Johannes Bronkhorst; publ. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi, 110 007; 1994; pp. 273; Rs. 225/-.

The Philosophy of Language is now an important branch of study in Western Philosophy. The theories of meaning also add to its wealth. Bhartṛhari's contributions in these matters are enormous and highly penetrating. He lived in the tenth century. Being both a grammarian and a philosopher, his influence on subsequent grammatical and philosophical thought in India is astonishingly great. In spite of this the scholars did not give him till now the attention he deserves, because his writings are very difficult; they were not available until recently in satisfactory editions. However, interest among scholars for studying Bhartṛhari's works is now growing. This is the reason why an International Conference on him was organized in January 1992 at Pune, under the joint auspices of the University of Poona and the University of Lausanne (Swit-

zerland). The volume under review contains some of the papers read at this conference and also an up-to-date bibliography on him.

As many as fifteen papers contributed by Indian and foreign scholars have been incorporated in this volume. All the papers exhibit the marks of scholarship, research and penetration. Ashok Aklujkar of the University of Columbia has given an introduction to the study of Bhartṛhari. He has dedicated his presentation to the memory of Professor Bimal Krishna Motilal, who tried to establish that Indian philosophy as distinguished from religion and theology has recognizable contribution even to analytical and linguistic philosophy. Aklujkar has also contributed a paper, on the authorship of the *Trikāṇḍī-Vṛtti*. The author's view is controversial and the scholars are to decide the issue.

Akihiko Akamatsu of Japan has discussed Pratibhā and the meaning of the sentence in Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*.

Pt. V.B. Bhagavat has contributed his paper, 'Śrīmad-Bhartṛhari Nāgeśaśca' in Sanskrit. Its inclusion in the volume is suggestive of the fact that, for a discussion on Bhartṛhari, knowledge of Sanskrit is a must and the scholars are expected to understand the paper in Sanskrit.

Prof. Saroja Bhate, of the University of Poona, has discussed Bhartṛhari on language and reality. This paper is a further extension of the problem posed by Dr. J. Kelley in his paper, namely,

whether the *Vākyapadīya* can be looked upon as an argument about the limitations for a formal system of analysis to describe linguistic phenomena.

Dr. Johannes Bronkhorst, of the University of Lausanne, has considered some possible links between Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* and the *Vaiśeṣika* of his days.

Prof. Madhab M. Deshpande, of the University of Michigan, has his paper on 'The Changing Notion of Śiṣṭa from Patañjali to Bhartṛhari'. Dr. Brendan Gillon, of the University of McGill (Canada), has discussed Bhartṛhari's solution to the problem of *asamarthā* compounds. All these are highly technical and meant for scholars only.

Prof. Massaki Hatiori of Japan has discussed Kamalaśīla's interpretation of some verses in the 'Vākyakāṇḍa' of Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*. Mr. Yoshichika Honda of Japan has dealt with Bhartṛhari's definition of Kriyā. Dr. J.E.M. Houben has contributed a paper on the development of Bhartṛhari's philosophy of language. About Bhartṛhari and the Bauddhas, two papers are incorporated in the volume—one by John D. Kelley of Princeton University and the other by Prof. Christian Lindtner of Denmark.

A comparative study of *Vākyapadīya* and *Mahābhāṣya-Dīpikā* on Sphota is made by G.B. Palsule of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune. Vivakṣā in the *Vākyapadīya* is discussed by Anna Radicchi of Italy.

Yves Ramseier's Bibliography on Bhartṛhari will help new scholars.

The book under review shows that many western scholars are interested in Bhartṛhari and their papers are the products of long research and penetrative study. Indian and Japanese thinkers also have made equally good contributions to the subject.

The coloured jacket of the book with a beautiful picture enhances the attraction of the volume. Paper and print are as expected. The volume deserves wide circulation among the scholars of Bhartṛhari. This volume is not meant for ordinary readers.

Dr. Nirod Baran Chakraborty
Calcutta

The name M. Hirianna is well known to the discerning readers of Indian philosophy. This publication (in fact a reprint), which is a follow-up to his earlier book entitled, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, is an attempt to present before the lay readers a concise but absorbing account of the subject, interspersed with interpretations and criticisms.

Beginning with chapter one, which summarizes Vedic religion and philosophy, the author takes the reader by the hand through the intricate paths of Indian thought, starting from the early post-Vedic period and the subsequent transition to the age of systems. The various systems which emerged over a period of time to differentiate one school of thought from another have been considered in some detail.

It is a neat publication which has, for the convenience of readers, a glossary of Sanskrit terms, abbreviations, notes and references as well as a useful subject index.

Arnab Ganguli
Calcutta

SRI SANKARA—HIS LIFE, PHILOSOPHY AND RELEVANCE TO MAN IN MODERN TIMES; by Dr. S. Sankaranarayanan; The Adyar Library & Research Centre, Theosophical Society, Madras 600 020; pp. 347+xxix; 1995; Rs. 150/-.

Sankaracharya represents the highwater mark of Indian thought. No name is better known in its history, and no doctrine has exercised greater influence, than his. With all this, it is surprising that very little that is of historical importance is known about the life and times of this most attractive personality.

Few other religious philosophers have inspired such a great number of biographies as Sankara has. Dr. Sankaranarayanan's purpose has not been merely to add one to the many that already exist. He begins his book with a general review of more than thirty sources for the study of Sankara's life and follows it up with a short criticism from the historical point of view. Most of these works that profess to be biographies of Sankara were composed several centuries after his time. Filled as they are with legendary stories and incredible anecdotes, some of which contradict each other, they provide us with little material with which to construct his life with certainty. This book is an attempt to sort out facts from fancy and present an account of his life in a form that is largely agreed upon by the biogra-

THE ESSENTIALS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY; by M. Hirianna; publ. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi 110 007; 1995; pp. 216; Rs. 150/- (cloth), Rs. 98/- (paper).

phers and acceptable to modern readers.

In chapter 2 the author describes the age which saw the advent of Sankaracharya. It was not unlike our own. Sankara was active during a critical time when India was politically divided and socially disordered. Conflict was rife among philosophical schools, and hostility intense among religious sects. While the learned paid no heed to the basic Vedic teaching that the Real is One, popular Hinduism occupied the minds of ordinary people. Altogether, India was in a state of utter confusion.

The next three chapters deal with the life of Sankaracharya. The great object of Sankara's labours was the revival of the system of religion and philosophy taught in the Upanishads. For this he wrote many works, carried on dialectical controversies all through India, and succeeded in putting down heterodoxy and establishing the doctrine of Advaita.

Relatively more space has been devoted to what is perhaps the most interesting episode in Sankara's life—his heated debate with Mandanamisra, in which the latter's wife acted as an umpire—since this is thought to reflect a historical fact, that is, the keen conflict between Advaitins and Mimamsakas. However, the author dismisses the Ubhaya-Bharati interlude as a later interpolation; for, a sannyasin of Madhava Vidyaranya's stature could not have conceived of such an inappropriate interference by Mandanamisra's wife. 'Above all,' he says, 'from Mimamsa or Vedanta to the science of sex is a far cry.' Indeed.

Sankara's founding of the four monasteries was a significant factor in the development of his teachings into the preeminent philosophy among the learned circles of India. He no doubt stood for a form of uncompromising monism, but at the same time he advocated worship of the Personal God (though he opposed the grosser manifestations of Saiva and Sakta worship and their pernicious practices). He popularized the Vedic *pañcāyatana-pūjā*, and also included in it the worship of Kumara Subrahmanya. The innovative spirit of Sankara combined the worship of six deities into one single rite, with the result that the vast majority, whose faith might have been completely eroded by the negative approach of Buddhism, were given something that kept them united within the theistic fold. Thus Sankara safeguarded the cultural unity of India.

Chapter 6 summarizes Sankaracharya's philosophy. His doctrine can be crisply expressed in the well-known line: *brahma satyaṁ jagan-mithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*. Only the self-existing *caitanya* which is without any limitations is real; everything else without exception is unreal,

falsely superimposed upon it. Thus the unity of Brahman, according to Sankara, is absolute, without the slightest trace of duality which can only belong to the empirical world.

The formula *tat-tvam-asi* (That thou art), which asserts the identity of Atman and Brahman, would be interpreted according to Sankara's doctrine as follows: *tat* means Brahman; *tvam* means the *jīva*; and *asi* signifies the apposition of these two. So, what is inconsistent in the connotation of these two terms is to be rejected, and what is consistent alone is to be retained—which is only *caitanya* pure and simple, all the rest being phenomenal and consequently illusory. In other words, the identity of 'That' and 'thou' is not possible unless one alone is real and the other unreal.

The essence of philosophical thought, for Sankara, consists in proceeding from plurality to unity, in discovering the One which underlies the many that we see in and around us. If this is so, no human conception can go any farther.

National integration, universal brotherhood, religious and political fanaticism, ecology are burning topics today. Sankara was a prophet of reconciliation and harmony. His philosophy stresses the fundamental unity and total harmony of existence. If only we follow the art of living which he preached, we should be able to overcome the ills that we have acquired by our worship of technology. Dr. Sankaranarayanan is well in touch with modern knowledge and current affairs, and highlights in this last chapter the unmistakable influence of Sankaracharya's teachings on Mahatma Gandhi. That should remove any misgivings about the practicability of Sankara's message today.

No life history of Sankaracharya is complete until it considers the problems connected with his biography! The four points that are taken for a brief and inconclusive discussion in the Appendixes are: (1) the date of Sankara; (2) the institutions he founded; (3) where he passed away; and (4) the works attributed to him. Controversy dogs the author from page to page, but he has tried to manage the various internal and external evidences with as little bias as possible. The reader is apprised of the wide variations of views on them. These may be important historical issues but, being themselves open to question, they can yield only possibilities and not certainties. Since there is now no hope of ever reaching a satisfactory conclusion, the author has relegated them to just the place they deserve in a book of this kind (though he has his opinions).

This monograph is a sincere effort reflecting two years' dedicated labour. Dr. Sankaranarayanan has spared no pains to explain points of the

legend and philosophy of Sankara. Written by an eminent scholar who has a good grasp of Ancient Indian History, this will prove very useful to those intent on a fuller knowledge of the great Sankaracharya's life in all its varied and challenging aspects.

*Swami Bhasvatananda
Belur Math*

**VIVEKANANDA: EAST MEETS WEST; by
Swami Chetanananda; Vedanta Society
of St. Louis, 205 South Skinker Blvd., St.
Louis, Missouri, 63105, U.S.A.; 1995;
pp. 164+xii; \$ 35.00.**

Swami Vivekananda's contribution toward bridging the East and the West has been widely recognized. His vision of a meeting between the two cultures is reflected in his universal teachings, which centre around the Vedantic realization of the oneness of the universe. This vision has been captured in this fine pictorial biography.

Reading *Vivekananda: East Meets West* may be compared to viewing a beautiful painting of the famous French Impressionist painter, Claude Monet. As in the painting where the artists's palette and technique enliven his subject by conveying a sense of movement, similarly the arrangements of photographs throughout the book creates a dynamic mood, which flows from image to image.

In its nine chapters we are rewarded with all the available photographs of Swami Vivekananda, which are arresting in their immediacy and clarity. This, in and of itself, makes the volume immeasurably valuable to those interested in Swamiji, especially his followers.

In addition to the captivating photos of the great swami, photographs of distinguished people he met in both the East and the West, as well as places associated with his life are also included. Photographs have a way of making a deep impression on the mind; there is a sense of reality, a three-dimensional quality that visually stimulates the creative imagination, making the person or place photographed vibrant with life. This quality is one of the outstanding features of *Vivekananda: East Meets West*—as the Chinese proverb quoted in the introductory note says, 'One picture is worth more than ten thousand words.'

The first three chapters span the thirty-year period 1863–1893. Here a vivid picture of Narendra's blazing spiritual yearning is portrayed. Not

until he met Sri Ramakrishna, who positively answered his question, 'Sir, have you seen God?' did he feel that his life had direction and purpose. Placing himself under the loving care of Sri Ramakrishna, Narendra was molded into Swami Vivekananda, a fit instrument and living example of his Master's universal message that man is divine. Chapters four to six cover the intensely active years of 1893–1896, which include Swamiji's historic introduction to the West through the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and his subsequent travels to various places in the United States and Europe, where he spread Vedanta through lectures, classes and informal gatherings. Chapters seven to nine include the period 1897–1902, which explore Swamiji's triumphal return to India as a national hero, his rousing of the Indian nation, the beginnings of the Ramakrishna Mission, his second visit to the West—initially thought to be a period of recouping his health, but ending in another vigorous round of lectures and classes, especially in California—and finally his return to India a few years before he entered into mahasamadhi in 1902.

Besides Christopher Isherwood's insightful biographical introduction, each chapter is preceded by a brief impressionistic narrative of the swami's life, which is then highlighted with relevant quotes and stories from published accounts. The selections of biographical details interwoven throughout the text have been well chosen and are aptly illustrated by the 275 photographs that accompany them. In the space of 160 pages many of the salient features of the swami's life and teachings have been covered. Though the information about Swamiji is not new, the presentation is unique—drawing one's attention to the multifaceted personality and spiritual genius that he was. The author has extracted the essence of Swami Vivekananda, making this book a fitting tribute to his arrival in the West for the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions.

In keeping with its tradition, the Vedanta Society of St. Louis has done a magnificent job in producing this book. The elegant jacket design, high-quality art paper and binding, creative layout, and, most importantly, the quality of the photographs are superb. With a few minor exceptions, including differences of opinion about the time and place where some of Swamiji's photos were taken, the book is flawless. There's no question that *Vivekananda: East Meets West* is an excellent addition to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature.

*Pravrajika Virajaprana
Vedanta Society of Northern California,
San Francisco*